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THE WORKS
OF
SHAKESPEARE
VOL. IX

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THE WORKS
OF
SHAKESPEARE

EDITED
WITH INTRODUCTIONS AND NOTES

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KING LEAR

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

LEAR, king of Britain.
KING OF FRANCE.
DUKE OF BURGUNDY.
DUKE OF CORNWALL.
DUKE OF ALBANY.
EARL OF KENT.
EARL OF GLOUCESTER.
EDGAR, son to Gloucester.
EDMUND, bastard son to Gloucester.
CURAN, a courtier.
Old Man, tenant to Gloucester.
Doctor.
Fool.
OSWALD, steward to Goneril.
A Captain employed by Edmund.
Gentleman attendant on Cordelia.
A Herald.
Servants to Cornwall.

GONERIL, }
REGAN, } daughters to Lear.
CORDELIA, }

Knights of Lear's train, Captains, Messengers Soldiers, and Attendants.

SCENE : *Britain.*

INTRODUCTION

THE first edition of *King Lear*, in Quarto (Q₁), was printed in 1608, and has the following title-page:—

M. William Shak-speare: | HIS | True Chronicle
Historie of the life and | death of King LEAR and
his three | Daughters. | *With the unfortunate life of*
Edgar, sonne | and heire to the Earle of Gloster,
and his | sullen and assumed humor of | TOM of
Bedlam: | *As it was played before the Kings Maiestie*
at Whitehall upon | S. Stephans night in Christmas
Hollidayes. | By his Maiesties seruants playing usually
at the Gloabe | on the Bancke-side. | LONDON, |
Printed for *Nathaniel Butter*, and are to be sold at
his shop in *Pauls* | Churchyard at the signe of the
Pide Bull neere | St. Austins Gate. 1608. |

Below the title is a device, identical with one used by the Frankfurt printers, Wechelum.

The bibliography of this edition is complicated by the fact that it was hastily made up of sheets which had, and of others which had not, been corrected, all the six extant copies containing from one to four uncorrected sheets, and being in only two cases alike.¹ The 'corrections' are merely those of a somewhat incompetent printer.

¹ Thus one of the two British Museum copies and one of the two Bodleian copies contain only one uncorrected sheet; the Devonshire copy, three.

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In the same year a second Quarto (Q₂) appeared, with a different device, and omitting the name of the place of sale. The text of Q₂ follows now the corrected, now the uncorrected copies of Q₁, frequently, however, perverting both with new corrections of its own, all unauthentic and, with three or four possible exceptions, all wrong. They are of no interest for the student of Shakespeare.¹ A third Quarto was carelessly printed in 1655 from Q₂.

A graver problem concerns the relation of the Quartos to the First Folio. The circumstances resemble those of *Richard III*. The text swarms with variations in word and phrase, and each version omits considerable passages which the other supplies. Of the variants a large number are purely indifferent, —substitutions of metrically equivalent synonyms. In a number of others the Folio corrects the palpable blunders of the Qq, many of which, however, it retains. In a third, smaller, group the Qq seem to give the genuine version, the Ff a diffuse perversion of it which had gained a vogue on the stage.² About 50 lines occur in the Folio for the first

¹ Of considerable interest, however, for the student of Shakespeare's public. A pithy phrase of Goneril's (iv. 2. 28), *e.g.*, underwent the following transformations :—

(1) Q₁ (with sheet H uncorrected) :

My foote usurpes my body.

(2) Q₁ (with sheet H corrected) :

A foole usurpes my bed.

(3) Q₂ :

My foote usurpes my head.

The Folio first gave the accepted text :

My foole usurpes my body.

Prætorius : Facsimiles of Q₁ and Q₂, Introduction.

Equally curious was the fate of Kent's 'Nothing almost sees miracles but miserie' (ii. 2. 172). In the uncorrected Q₁ this is given as : 'Nothing almost sees my rackles but,' etc. The 'corrected' Q₁ amends 'my rackles' to 'my wracke,' and this is followed by Q₂.

² Thus, in ii. 2. 152 : (of Kent in the stocks) Qq 'the king must take it ill,'—is expanded in Ff (against metre) to 'the king his master needs must take it ill.'

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time.¹ On the other hand, the Ff omit some 220 lines found in Qq.² Of the authenticity of all the passages peculiar to either text there cannot be a doubt, and there is a strong *prima facie* probability that all are derived from the same original version, so long a play being inevitably curtailed in performance. The omissions in Ff are certainly due to such curtailment, whether this be ascribed to Shakespeare himself, with Koppel,³ or, with Delius,⁴ to irresponsible actors.⁵ The additions in the Ff are more difficult to judge. Some of them may be referred, as Delius would refer all, to the palpably careless printer.⁶ Others

¹ The chief of these are: ii. 4. 142-147 (*Say . . . blame*); iii. 2. 79-95 (*This . . . time*); iv. 1. 6-9 (*Welcome . . . blasts*).

² The chief of these are: i. 3. 16-20 (*Not to be . . . abused*); i. 4. 154-169 (*That lord . . . snatching*); 252-256 (*I would learn . . . father*); ii. 2. 148-152 (*His fault . . . are punish'd with*); iii. 1. 7-15 (*tears . . . take all*); 30-42 (*But, true . . . to you*); iii. 6. 17-59 (*The foul . . . 'scape*); iv. 2. 31-50 (*I fear . . . deep*); iv. 3. ; v. 1. 23-28 (*Where I . . . nobly*); v. 3. 54-59 (*At this time . . . place*); 204-221 (*This . . . slave*).

³ *Text-kritische Studien über Richard III. u. King Lear* (1877).

⁴ *Ueber den ursprünglichen Text des King Lear* (Jahrbuch x. 50 f.). Delius replied to Koppel in *Anglia* i. (chiefly with reference to *Richard III.*).

⁵ Some of the passages excised are necessary for comprehension, e.g. iii. 1. 30-42 (the account of the French invasion); or for the consistency of the context, e.g. iv. 2. 31-50 (Albany's reproof

of Goneril); in Ff her 'Milk-liver'd man,' v. 50, appears unprovoked; others belong to the high poetry of the play rather than to its dramatic mechanism. It is hard to believe that Shakespeare could have cut out the trial of Goneril (iii. 6. 17-59).

⁶ Thus in ii. 4. 22 (the rapid colloquy of Lear with Kent in the stocks)—

L. By Jupiter, I swear, no.

K. By Juno, I swear, ay (omitted in Qq).

L. They durst not do 't—

the compositor's eye seems to have been misled by the similarity of Kent's speech to Lear's. In other cases a longer but still more necessary speech has clearly dropped out.

Thus, in the dialogue of the Fool with Lear in iii. 6. 10 f., Qq give the Fool's question: 'Prithee, nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman?' and Lear's wonderful: 'A king, a king!' but omit the Fool's comment: 'No, he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son,' etc.

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may be passages hastily cut out in the early acting version, but afterwards restored. The theory of a subsequent Shakespearean revision cannot be absolutely dismissed. If Shakespeare in his ripest maturity patched *King Lear*, his art was probably quite a match for our tests, as it hardly is in the patching of *Love's Labour's Lost*. But a study of the variants rather suggests that they can be wholly explained from the twofold operation of blundering printers (in Qq) and semi-intelligent actors (in Ff). Doubtless they have sometimes co-operated to deprive us of Shakespeare's phrases altogether. No dogmatic opinion can be pronounced; but the hypothesis, on the whole, works well, that the play was first badly printed (in Qq) from a MS. slightly abridged for the performance at Court; subsequently well printed (in the Folio) from a copy of Q₂ rather carelessly corrected by the more severely abridged and amended stage MS.

The date of *King Lear* may be fixed with some certainty in 1605-6. An entry in the Stationers' Register, under Nov. 26, 1607, shows that it was 'played before the Kings Majesty at Whitehall upon S. Stephens night at Christmas last,' *i.e.* on Dec. 26, 1606. Phenomenal events had marked the autumn of the previous year: in October, a great eclipse of the sun; in November, the appalling plot of Guy Fawkes. Gloster's faith that 'these eclipses do portend these divisions,' and Edmund's ridicule of it, can hardly be detached from circumstances in which this 'excellent foppery of the world' must have been peculiarly rife. In no case can the drama have been written before 1603, the names of Edgar's fiends being taken from Harsnett's *Declaration of Popish Impostures*, published in that year.

Lear (Leir, Llyr), tenth king of Britain 'in the

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year of the world 3105, at what time Joas reigned in Juda,' was a familiar name to the Elizabethans. As undisputed history his legend had been transcribed by successive chroniclers, in prose and verse, from Layamon to Holinshed (1577); as a dramatic story, with a telling moral, it had attracted the compilers of the *Gesta Romanorum* and of the *Mirror for Magistrates*. In Higgins' supplementary First Part of that popular repertory of tragic tales (1574) 'Queen Cordila' told her father's fate and her own. Spenser, a little later, epitomised the story in half a dozen stanzas of the *Faerie Queene* (bk. ii. c. x. 27-32). Finally, in 1592-3, an unknown hand dramatised it as 'The Chronicle Historie of King Leir and his Three Daughters.' The play was entered in the Stationers' Register, 1594, but first printed in 1605, with a title-page calculated to identify it with the great tragedy then in the first splendour of its fame. The ultimate source of all these versions is Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Britonum*, founded professedly upon an old Welsh chronicle. The motive of the Love-test and the Threefold division has far-reaching affinities and parallels in folklore. Camden tells it of the West Saxon king Ina. The legend, as told in all these versions, consists of three groups of incidents. In the first, Lear puts his three daughters to the love-test, and disinherits the youngest, who fails to satisfy it. In the second, the two favoured daughters maltreat him in various ways. In the third, the disgraced daughter rescues and restores him.

The first group of incidents is evidently the kernel of the whole, but its fantastic extravagance favoured variation, and three distinct versions were current among the Elizabethans. According to the first (that of Geoffrey of Monmouth and the *Mirror for Magis-*

reform

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trates), Lear questions his daughters to ascertain which deserves the largest of the three prospective shares, thinking 'to guerdon most where favour most be found.'¹ According to the second (Spenser's), three *equal* shares have already been arranged, and the questions aim merely at a formal test of the competency of the heirs to inherit them. In the third version (Holinshed's), the questions are a mere disguise for the king's partiality to Cordelia: he designs to bequeath the kingdom entire, and 'preferre hir whom he best loved to the succession.'

Cordelia's reply, again, though always unsatisfactory to her father, exhibits several shades of bluntness, from the brutal '*So much as you have, so much you are worth, and so much I love you, and no more*' of Geoffrey, to the discreet declaration in the *Mirror for Magistrates* version, that she loves him '*as I ought my father*.' Holinshed's Cordeilla accounts for her love in both ways. Camden's version alone anticipates the beautiful and cogent reason of Shakespeare's Cordelia: 'Albeit she did love . . . him and so would while she lived, as much as duty and daughterly love at the uttermost could expect, yet she did think that one day it would come to pass that she should affect another more fervently, when she was married.'

So far, it is to be noted, there is no question of abdication. Lear has merely appointed his heirs. In Holinshed he allows the heirs to take immediate possession of half their future domains, but retains the other halves during his life. The dukes, however, grow impatient, and 'thinking it long ere the government of the land did come to their hands,' they 'arose against him in armour and reft from him the governance of the land, upon conditions to be continued for term of life.' The conditions are broken

¹ *Mirror for Magistrates*, i. 125.

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and his allowance diminished ; he flies to Cordeilla in Gallia, where he is 'so joyfully, honourably and lovingly received . . . that his heart was greatly comforted.' She raises a great army and fleet, they cross over to Britain, fight a great battle in which the dukes are slain, 'and then was Leir restored to his Kingdom, which he ruled after this by the space of two years, and then died, forty years after he began to reign.' Cordeilla succeeds him, and reigns for five years ; when Margan the son of Gonorilla and Cunedag the son of Ragan rebelled against her, and 'being a woman of a manly courage' she ends her life.¹

The whole of this after-history, however, is dismissed by Holinshed with a brief summary. The core of the legend still lies for him in the dramatic incident of the Love-test. For Shakespeare this incident is a mere preliminary to the tragic plot,—a rudimentary survival important only for what it leads to. A dozen years before he wrote, the author of the old Chronicle History of *King Leir and his Three Daughters* had attempted to evoke the pathos of Lear's sufferings, in the fashion of the days when *Henry VI.* and *Edward II.* were recent. He makes some show of technique, providing fresh incidents and stronger motives for the old. Leir is seen at the outset about to abdicate his crown. The 'trial of love' is ingeniously connected with his schemes for marrying his daughters, becoming a sudden stragem to entrap Cordelia into compliance with his wishes :—

¹ The words of farewell in the *Mirror for Magistrates* look like a reminiscence of the then recent death of Mary :—

Farewell my realm of Fraunce, farewell, Adieu ;
Adieu mes nobles tous, and England
now farewell :

Farewell Madames my Ladyes, *car ie suis perdu*, etc.

Her suicide forms the climax of a long debate with 'Despair,' which perhaps suggested the great scene in book i. c. ix. of the *Faerie Queene*.

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Then at the vantage will I take Cordeilla,
Even as she doth protest she loves me best,
I'll say, 'Then, daughter, grant me one request,
To show thou lovest me as thy sisters do,
Accept a husband whom myself will woo . . .
Then will I triumph in my policy,
And match her with a King of Brittany.'

The stratagem fails, and Cordeilla is disinherited despite the protest of Leir's faithful counsellor Perillus. As the guest of Goneril he shows himself

the mirrour of mild patience,
Puts up all wrongs and never gives reply.¹

The inoffensive Leir at length flies; whereupon Goneril incenses Regan against him with a slanderous report that he 'hath detracted her and most intolerably abused me.' Regan, infuriated, commissions the 'Messenger,' a serviceable rogue, to murder Leir and Perillus. After the manner of Lightborn with Edward in the dungeon (*Edw. II.* v. 5.), or Gloster with Henry in the Tower (3 *Hen. VI.* . 6.), he holds a catlike dialogue with the two helpless old men. At the critical moment a *deus ex machina* in the form of a clap of thunder intervenes to save them; the Messenger quakes and drops the daggers. Leir and Perillus then escape to France, and faint with hunger and exposure fall in with Cordeilla and her husband disguised as peasant folk. Slowly her identity dawns upon him, and a pathetic recognition-scene ensues. With Leir's triumphant restoration the play ends. A dozen years earlier the time-honoured tragic climax of Cordelia's death would hardly have been thus forborne.

It is clear that the author of the Chronicle play

¹ A phrase perhaps in Shakespeare's mind when he made Lear, piteously striving with his

frenzy, exclaim: 'No, I will be the pattern of all patience' (iii. 2. 37).

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made important advances in the plot, some of which Shakespeare did not disdain to adopt. Lear, like his prototype, resigns his kingdom, and does not merely determine who shall inherit it after his death. Kent is a blunter Perillus, Oswald a less masculine 'Messenger.' Leir's reunion with Cordeilla faintly foreshadows the ineffable pathos of the close of Shakespeare's Fourth Act.¹ But beyond this, the old play interests us chiefly as setting forth paths from which Shakespeare deliberately departed. Such guidance to the workings of Shakespeare's art and mind is here peculiarly welcome, for *King Lear* confronts us with more baffling problems than any other tragedy, hardly excepting even *Hamlet*.

To the author of *Othello*, the Leir story naturally suggested a tragedy of fateful credulity and poignant disillusion. For the imagined unfaithfulness of a wife there were the actual infidelities of children: if aught could be more pathetic than the pang of 'jealousy' which 'perplexes' and overwhelms Othello, it was the ruin wrought by the serpent's tooth of ingratitude in the yet simpler and greater heart of an old father. Such a character was already hinted in the Leir of the legend. All these germs of tragic unreason, which the painstaking and matter-of-fact older playwright did his best to eliminate, are expanded and vitalised in the wonderful, Titanically infantine,

¹ *Cor.* Ah, good old father, tell to
me thy griefe,
Ile sorrow with thee, if not edde
reliefe.

Leir. Ah, good young daughter, I
may call thee so;
For thou art like a daughter I did
owe.

Cor. Do you not owe her still?
What, is she dead?

Leir. No, God forbid; but all my
interest's gone

By shewing myself too unnatural:

So have I lost the title of a father,
And may be call'd a stranger to her
rather.

Here may be the germ of

Leir. . . . As I am a man, I think
this lady

To be my child Cordelia.

Cor. And so I am, I am.

Leir. . . . your sisters

Have, as I do remember, done me
wrong:

You have some cause, they have not.
(iv. 7. 698 f.)

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Lear of Shakespeare,—that sea where all the winds of tragedy meet in tumult.

This procedure is exhibited with peculiar daring in the much-discussed opening scene. Goethe branded it as 'irrational'; and irrational it is in so far as it throws into glaring prominence the sublime unreason of Lear. Far from rationalising the folk-tale *motif*, Shakespeare combines several incongruous versions of it in the chaotic purposes of the king. In some versions, as we have seen, the kingdom is to be equally divided, in others the shares are proportioned to the 'love.' It is reserved for Shakespeare's Lear after contemplating an equal division and assigning two 'ample thirds' to the elder daughters, to invite Cordelia to merit 'a third more opulent than your sisters.' In their subsequent attitude, again, the Lear of the *Chronicle*, and of the old play, were both consistent; the one had not abdicated, and therefore justly claimed his royal state; the other resigned his state with his crown. It was reserved for Shakespeare's Lear to insist upon keeping the authority of kingship after he had 'given it away.' The Lear of the old play brings no retinue to his daughter's house; the Lear of the *Mirror for Magistrates* brings sixty knights who are not described as unruly; it was reserved for Shakespeare's Lear to bring a hundred who 'hourly carp and quarrel,' and to meet resentful protests with the fierce intractable irony of his, 'Your name, fair gentlewoman?'—the ominous premonition of the frenzy of implacable rage which burns itself out only after consuming the vast tottering fabric of his mind,—that 'tower sublime of yesterday, that royally did wear its crown of weeds.'

In the splendour of that consuming flame the tragedy reaches its climax. Lear's madness is rooted in his unreason,—it is the inevitable fate of an

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intellect too rigid and untaught to find its bearings in a world where its will is thwarted. But the shock which blurs his senses startles into activity new faculties of apprehension and divination. Insensibly before our eyes the proportions of things change, the irrational and intractable old man grows into the sublime embodiment of 'a grandeur that baffles the malice of daughters and of storms'; 'in the aberrations of his reason we discover a mighty irregular power of reasoning, immethodised from the ordinary purposes of life, but exerting its powers, as the wind bloweth where it listeth, at will upon the corruptions and abuses of mankind.'¹

Then the lurid splendour fades, the great rage expires, and all that is left in the ruined mind, his vehement, childlike need of love, flings him, helpless as a child, into Cordelia's healing and upholding arms. The gladness of her presence irradiates his mind:—

Come, let's away to prison :
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage :

.

And take upon's the mystery of things
As if we were God's spies : . . .

She fans the frail spark of his existence, and with the inexorable fate that stops her breath, it expires. Thus Shakespeare brings the old 'tragic tale' of Cordelia's desperate death, like all the other miseries of the story, into relation with the supreme pathos of the fate of Lear.

It was evidently as a foil to Lear's sublime agony that Shakespeare introduced the crasser and more material Nemesis that visits the kindred folly of Gloster. The two stories have the obtrusive parallelism of Shakespeare's early comic plots—one of several

¹ Charles Lamb.

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points in which the drama on the technical side might be described as an assemblage of Shakespeare's discarded methods, touched to finer issues. In detail, however, they betray at once the different quality of their origin. Gloster's relations to Edmund and Edgar are expanded from the brief episode, in Sidney's *Arcadia*, of the Paphlagonian 'unkind king,' who is blinded by the son he favours, and the 'kind son' who then saves him by Edgar's dangerously fantastic stratagem. Across the woof of an immemorial Celtic folk-tale Shakespeare thus threw the modern fancy arabesque of an accomplished poet, with its deliberate audacities of horror and romance. The Gloster story echoes the theme of the Lear story in a duller and more conventional key, as the Laertes story echoes the story of Hamlet. The wrongs done and suffered are more grossly and glaringly criminal; but more deserved and less pathetic. Gloster's blinding far exceeds in material savagery any suffering inflicted upon Lear; but his dejected patience as he gropes with eyeless orbs towards Dover recalls only the meek suffering of the Leir of the *Chronicle*. His pangs stir in him no tempest of the mind. 'Poetic justice' is sublimely defied in the doom of Lear and of Cordelia; but Gloster is blinded by the child of his pleasant vices, and Edmund slain by the brother he has wronged. As Lear's tempest of the mind is opposed to Gloster's torments of the flesh, so the subtle malignity and blind, suicidal passion of Goneril and Regan stand in contrast with the cool, pragmatic villany of Gloster. Their common passion for him is the most salient trait added by Shakespeare to the Goneril and Regan of tradition, and the death of one at the hands of the other strikes a last fierce note from the chord of violated blood-ties that resounds through

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the play. But the dagger and the poison-bowl are not the habitual methods of the Shakespearean Regan and Goneril. They affect a subtler and more impalpable cruelty, conveyed through the forms of legal and speciously reasonable acts. Goneril does not, as in the old play, inflame Regan against Lear by slander, nor does Regan hire a murderer to despatch him. The exposure of Lear to the night and storm is, with wonderful art, made to appear the result of his headstrong choice. The two interwoven stories thus carry us through the whole gamut of suffering. No other tragedy is so charged with pain, so crowded with contrivers of harm. But no other is so lighted up with heroic goodness. The querulous laments of old Gloster over the 'machinations, hollowness, treachery, and ruinous disorders' of the time,—'in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason,'—express the groundwork of the tragedy, but hardly its ground-tone. Anarchy is rampant, but true hearts abound,—lonely beacons of the moral order which is half effaced in the social fabric. Fidelity and frankness were the salient traits of the traditional Cordelia. Shakespeare not only gives these traits a heightened beauty in her, but repeats them, subtly varied and modulated, in a series of other characters;—in the rough-tongued, loyal Kent; in Cornwall's brave 'dunghill slave,' who insolently avenges the blinding of Gloster; and, not least, in that exquisite scherzo to Cordelia's andante—the Fool. This characteristic type of the Comedies appears nowhere else in tragedy; but in the close of the comic period we find the Fool shaping towards the functions he performs in *Lear*. Frankness was his official prerogative; fidelity his added grace. The calamities of *As You Like It* are as the passing of a summer cloud compared with

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those of *Lear*; but such as they are, Touchstone shares in them, throwing in his lot with his banished mistresses, and pricking their romantic extravagances with the rough-hewn bolts of his dry brain. The overwhelming pathos of *Lear* is evolved from a situation in itself quite as capable of yielding farce; and as the tragedy deepens, humour melts into pathos in the chorus-like comments of the more exquisite and finely-tempered Touchstone who follows the king into the night and storm, and vanishes from our ken, like a wild dream-fancy, when the troubled morning breaks.

KING LEAR

ACT I.

SCENE I. *King Lear's palace.*

Enter KENT, GLOUCESTER, *and* EDMUND.

Kent. I thought the king had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Glou. It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for equalities are so weighed that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety.

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Glou. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have so often blushed to acknowledge him that now I am brazed to it.

Kent. I cannot conceive you.

Glou. Sir, this young fellow's mother could:

5f. *equalities* are so weighed, etc., *i.e.* their shares are so nicely balanced that the closest scrutiny detects no superiority in either. *Equalities*; so Qq. Ff 'qualities.' The textual notes upon this play cannot attempt to convey an adequate

impression of the countless divergences between Qq and Ff, or of the general inferiority of the former. The Qq readings will only be noticed where they are either adopted or at least plausible.

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ACT I

whereupon she grew round-wombed, and had, indeed, sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

Kent. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

Glou. But I have, sir, a son by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account: though this knave came something saucily into the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair; [there was good sport at his making,] and the whoreson must be acknowledged. Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

Edm. No, my lord.

Glou. My lord of Kent: remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

Edm. My services to your lordship.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving.

Glou. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again. The king is coming.

Sennet. Enter one bearing a coronet, KING LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, and Attendants.

Lear. Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester.

Glou. I shall, my liege.

[*Exeunt Gloucester and Edmund.*]

Lear. Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.

Give me the map there. Know that we have divided

In three our kingdom: and 'tis our fast intent

18. *proper*, goodly.

20. *some year*, a year or so.

37. *darker*, more secret.

To shake all cares and business from our age, 40
 Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
 Unburthen'd crawl toward death. Our son of
 Cornwall,

And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
 We have this hour a constant will to publish
 Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
 May be prevented now. The princes, France and
 Burgundy,

Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
 Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
 And here are to be answer'd. Tell me, my
 daughters,

Since now we will divest us, both of rule, 50
 Interest of territory, cares of state,
 Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
 That we our largest bounty may extend
 Where nature doth with merit challenge. Goneril,
 Our eldest-born, speak first.

Gon. Sir, I love you more than words can wield
 the matter;

Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;
 Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;
 No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour;
 As much as child e'er loved, or father found; 60
 A love that makes breath poor and speech unable;
 Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Cor. [*Aside*] What shall Cordelia do? Love,
 and be silent.

Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line
 to this,

40. *from our age*; so Ff. 'Of our state,' Qq. that of birth.' Qq 'Where merit most doth challenge it.'

50, 51. These two lines are not in Qq. 56. *wield the matter*, express.

54. *challenge*, claim. 'Where all possible comparison. 62. *all manner of so much*, 63. *do*; so Qq. Ff 'speak.'

With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
 With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
 We make thee lady : to thine and Albany's issue
 Be this perpetual. What says our second daughter,
 Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.

Reg. I am made of that self metal as my sister, 70
 And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
 I find she names my very deed of love ;
 Only she comes too short : that I profess
 Myself an enemy to all other joys,
 Which the most precious square of sense possesses ;
 And find I am alone felicitate
 In your dear highness' love.

Cor. [*Aside*] Then poor Cordelia !
 And yet not so, since, I am sure, my love's
 More ponderous than my tongue. 80

Lear. To thee and thine hereditary ever
 Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom ;
 No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
 Than that conferr'd on Goneril. Now, our joy,
 Although the last, not least, to whose young love
 The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
 Strive to be interest'd, what can you say to draw
 A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

Cor. Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing !

Cor. Nothing. 90

Lear. Nothing will come of nothing : speak
 again.

70. *self*, same.

72. *names my very deed of love*,
 exactly expresses my love.

75. *the most precious square
 of sense*, the most exquisitely
 susceptible region of our sensible
 nature.

80. *ponderous* ; so Qq. Ff
 'richer.'

85. *the last, not least* ; so Qq.
 Ff 'our last and least.'

87. *to be interest'd . . . to*, to ac-
 quire a concern in. Ff 'interest' ;
 but the verb 'interesse' is abund-
 antly attested in this sense.

92. *Nothing will come of
 nothing*. Alluding to the
 proverb : 'Ex nihilo nihil fit.'

King Lear

Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth : I love your majesty
According to my bond ; nor more nor less.

Lear. How, how, Cordelia ! mend your speech
a little,
Lest it may mar your fortunes.

Cor. Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, loved me : I
Return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you. 100
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you all ? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall
carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty :
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.

Lear. But goes thy heart with this ?

Cor. Ay, good my lord.

Lear. So young, and so untender ?

Cor. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Let it be so ; thy truth then be thy
dower : 110

For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate, and the night ;
By all the operation of the orbs
From whom we do exist and cease to be ;
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee from this for ever. The barbarous
Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom 120
Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and relieved,

102. *all*, exclusively.

119. *generation*, offspring.

King Lear

ACT I

As thou my sometime daughter.

Kent.

Good my liege,—

Lear. Peace, Kent !

Come not between the dragon and his wrath.

I loved her most, and thought to set my rest

On her kind nursery. Hence, and avoid my sight !

So be my grave my peace, as here I give

Her father's heart from her ! Call France. Who
stirs ?

Call Burgundy. Cornwall and Albany,

With my two daughters' dowers digest this third : 130

Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.

I do invest you jointly with my power,

Pre-eminence, and all the large effects

That troop with majesty. Ourself, by monthly
course,

With reservation of an hundred knights,

By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode

Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain

The name, and all the additions to a king ;

The sway, revenue, execution of the rest,

Beloved sons, be yours : which to confirm,

This coronet part betwixt you. 146

Kent.

Royal Lear,

Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,

Loved as my father, as my master follow'd,

As my great patron thought on in my prayers,—

Lear. The bow is bent and drawn, make from
the shaft.

Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade

The region of my heart : be Kent unmannerly,

When Lear is mad. What wilt thou do, old man ?

Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak,

125. *set my rest* (in the game myself absolutely.
of primero, to stake all upon the
cards in one's hand), entrust

126. *nursery*, nursing.

138. *additions*, titles.

King Lear

When power to flattery bows? To plainness
honour's bound, 150

When majesty stoops to folly. Reverse thy doom,
And in thy best consideration check

This hideous rashness: answer my life my judge-
ment,

Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least;
Nor are those empty-hearted whose low sound
Reverbs no hollowness.

Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.

Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thy enemies; nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.

Lear. Out of my sight!

Kent. See better, Lear; and let me still remain 160
The true blank of thine eye.

Lear. Now, by Apollo,—

Kent. Now, by Apollo, king,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.

Lear. O, vassal! miscreant!
[*Laying his hands on his sword.*]

Alb. } Dear sir, forbear.
Corn. }

Kent. Do;

Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
Upon thy foul disease. Revoke thy doom;
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I'll tell thee thou dost evil.

Lear. Hear me, recreant!

On thine allegiance, hear me! 170

Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow,
Which we durst never yet, and with strain'd pride
To come between our sentence and our power,

151. *stoops*; so Qq. Ff 'falls.'
ib. *Reverse thy doom*; so Qq.
Ff 'reserve thy state.'

156. *Reverbs*, reverberates.
161. *blank*, lit. the white
centre of the target.

King Lear

ACT I

Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,
Our potency made good, take thy reward.
Five days we do allot thee, for provision
To shield thee from diseases of the world ;
And on the sixth to turn thy hated back
Upon our kingdom : if on the tenth day following
Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions, 180
The moment is thy death. Away ! by Jupiter,
This shall not be revoked.

Kent. Fare thee well, king : sith thus thou wilt
appear.

Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.

[*To Cordelia*] The gods to their dear shelter take
thee, maid,

That justly think'st, and hast most rightly said !

[*To Regan and Goneril*] And your large speeches
may your deeds approve,

That good effects may spring from words of love.

Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu ;

He 'll shape his old course in a country new. [*Exit.* 190

Flourish. Re-enter GLOUCESTER, with FRANCE,
BURGUNDY, and Attendants.

Glou. Here's France and Burgundy, my noble
lord.

Lear. My lord of Burgundy,

We first address towards you, who with this king
Hath rivall'd for our daughter : what, in the least,
Will you require in present dower with her,
Or cease your quest of love ?

Bur. Most royal majesty,
I crave no more than what your highness offer'd,

175. *potency*, royal authority.

176. *Five*; so Ff. Qq 'four.'

Similarly in 178, respectively
'sixth' and 'fifth.'

177. *diseases*, discomforts.

191. This line is given t
Cordelia in Ff.

King Lear

Nor will you tender less.

Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us, we did hold her so ;
But now her price is fall'n. Sir, there she stands : 200
If aught within that little seeming substance,
Or all of it, with our displeasure pieced,
And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,
She's there, and she is yours.

Bur. I know no answer.

Lear. Will you, with those infirmities she owes,
Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our
oath,
Take her, or leave her ?

Bur. Pardon me, royal sir ;
Election makes not up on such conditions.

Lear. Then leave her, sir ; for, by the power
that made me, 210
I tell you all her wealth. [*To France*] For you,
great king,
I would not from your love make such a stray,
To match you where I hate ; therefore beseech
you

To avert your liking a more worthier way
Than on a wretch whom nature is ashamed
Almost to acknowledge hers.

France. This is most strange,
That she, that even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
Most best, most dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle 220

199. *so*, i.e. 'dear,' of high choice.'

207. *stranger'd with our oath*, 212. *make such a stray*, stray
made a stranger by our oath. so far. 'I would not act so
unamiably towards you.'

209. *makes not up*, does not 217. *your best object*, 'the
decide. 'There is no possible delight of your eye.'

King Lear

ACT I

So many folds of favour. Sure, her offence
Must be of such unnatural degree,
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection
Fall'n into taint: which to believe of her,
Must be a faith that reason without miracle
Could never plant in me.

Cor. I yet beseech your majesty,—
If for I want that glib and oily art,
To speak and purpose not, since what I well
intend,

I'll do't before I speak,—that you make known
It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness,
No unchaste action, or dishonour'd step,
That hath deprived me of your grace and favour;
But even for want of that for which I am richer,
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
As I am glad I have not, though not to have it
Hath lost me in your liking.

230

Lear. Better thou
Hadst not been born than not to have pleased me
better.

France. Is it but this,—a tardiness in nature
Which often leaves the history unspoke
That it intends to do? My lord of Burgundy,
What say you to the lady? Love's not love
When it is mingled with regards that stand
Aloof from the entire point. Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.

240

Bur. Royal Lear,
Give but that portion which yourself proposed,
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.

Lear. Nothing: I have sworn; I am firm.

242. *regards*, considerations. *entire point*, have no relation to
that which is the object of
ib. *stand aloof from the* 'entire' or pure love.

King Lear

Bur. I am sorry then you have so lost a father

That you must lose a husband.

Cor. Peace be with Burgundy ! 250

Since that respects of fortune are his love,

I shall not be his wife.

France. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich,
being poor,

Most choice forsaken, and most loved despised,

Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon :

Be it lawful I take up what's cast away.

Gods, gods ! 'tis strange that from their cold'st
neglect

My love should kindle to inflamed respect.

Thy dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,

Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France : 260

Not all the dukes of waterish Burgundy

Can buy this unprized precious maid of me.

Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind :

Thou lovest here, a better where to find.

Lear. Thou hast her, France : let her be thine ;
for we

Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see

That face of hers again. Therefore be gone

Without our grace, our love, our benison.

Come, noble Burgundy.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt all but France,
Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia.*

France. Bid farewell to your sisters. 270

Cor. The jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes

Cordelia leaves you : I know you what you are ;

And like a sister am most loath to call

262. *unprized*, beyond price.

271. *The jewels*, etc. (in apposition to 'you').

264. *where* (used substantively).

271. *with wash'd eyes*, i.e. with tears.

King Lear

ACT I

Your faults as they are named. Use well our father :

To your professed bosoms I commit him :
But yet, alas, stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place.
So, farewell to you both.

Reg. Prescribe not us our duties.

Gon.

Let your study

Be to content your lord, who hath received you 280
At fortune's alms. You have obedience scanted,
And well are worth the want that you have wanted.

Cor. Time shall unfold what plaited cunning
hides :

Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.
Well may you prosper !

France.

Come, my fair Cordelia.

[*Exeunt France and Cordelia.*]

Gon. Sister, it is not a little I have to say of
what most nearly appertains to us both. I think
our father will hence to-night.

Reg. That's most certain, and with you ; next
month with us. 290

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is ;
the observation we have made of it hath not been
little : he always loved our sister most ; and with
what poor judgement he hath now cast her off
appears too grossly.

Reg. 'Tis the infirmity of his age : yet he hath
ever but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath
been but rash ; then must we look to receive
from his age, not alone the imperfections of long- 300

275. *professed*, full of pro- natural kindness which you
fessions. have not shown.

281. *scanted*, stinted.

283. *plaited*, folded.

282. *And well are worth*, etc.,
and are deservedly denied the

298. *of his time*, (part) of his
life.

King Lear

engrafted condition, but therewithal the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them.

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. There is further compliment of leave-taking between France and him. Pray you, let's hit together: if our father carry authority with such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

310

Reg. We shall further think on't.

Gon. We must do something, and i' the heat.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The Earl of Gloucester's castle.*

Enter EDMUND, with a letter.

Edm. Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base? 10
Who in the lusty stealth of nature take
More composition and fierce quality
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,
Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:

3. *Stand in the plague, etc.*, be
exposed to the tyranny of custom.

4. *curiosity*, nice scruples.
8. *generous*, spirited.

King Lear

ACT I

Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to the legitimate: fine word, 'legitimate'!
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper:
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

20

Enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. Kent banish'd thus! and France in
choler parted!
And the king gone to-night! subscribed his
power!

Confined to exhibition! All this done
Upon the gad! Edmund, how now! what news?

Edm. So please your lordship, none.

[Putting up the letter.]

Glou. Why so earnestly seek you to put up
that letter?

Edm. I know no news, my lord.

Glou. What paper were you reading?

30

Edm. Nothing, my lord.

Glou. No? What needed, then, that terrible
dispatch of it into your pocket? the quality of
nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let's
see: come, if it be nothing, I shall not need
spectacles.

Edm. I beseech you, sir, pardon me: it is a
letter from my brother, that I have not all o'er-
read; and for so much as I have perused, I find
it not fit for your o'er-looking.

40

Glou. Give me the letter, sir.

Edm. I shall offend, either to detain or give

21. *top the*; Capell's reading.
Ff 'to th'; Qq 'tooth.'

24. *subscribed*, signed away.

25. *exhibition*, allowance.

26. *Upon the gad*, on the spur
of the moment, offhand.

32. *terrible*, terrified.

it. The contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.

Glou. Let's see, let's see.

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue.

Glou. [*Reads*] 'This policy and reverence of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny; who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother,' 50

EDGAR.'

Hum—conspiracy!—'Sleep till I waked him,—you should enjoy half his revenue,'—My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in?—When came this to you? who brought it? 60

Edm. It was not brought me, my lord; there's the cunning of it; I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

Glou. You know the character to be your brother's?

Edm. If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but, in respect of that, I would fain think it were not. 70

Glou. It is his.

Edm. It is his hand, my lord; but I hope his heart is not in the contents.

Glou. Hath he never heretofore sounded you in this business?

Edm. Never, my lord: but I have heard him

48. *policy and reverence of age*, policy of revering age.

49. *best of our times*, best part of our lives.

King Lear

ACT I

oft maintain it to be fit, that, sons at perfect age,
and fathers declining, the father should be as
ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

Glou. O villain, villain! His very opinion in 80
the letter! Abhorred villain! Unnatural, de-
tested, brutish villain! worse than brutish! Go,
sirrah, seek him; I'll apprehend him: abomin-
able villain! Where is he?

Edm. I do not well know, my lord. If it
shall please you to suspend your indignation
against my brother till you can derive from him
better testimony of his intent, you should run a
certain course; where, if you violently proceed 90
against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make
a great gap in your own honour, and shake in
pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn
down my life for him, that he hath wrote this
to feel my affection to your honour, and to no
further pretence of danger.

Glou. Think you so?

Edm. If your honour judge it meet, I will
place you where you shall hear us confer of this,
and by an auricular assurance have your satis-
faction; and that without any further delay than 100
this very evening.

Glou. He cannot be such a monster—

Edm. Nor is not, sure.

Glou. To his father, that so tenderly and
entirely loves him. Heaven and earth! Ed-
mund, seek him out; wind me into him, I pray
you: frame the business after your own wisdom.
I would unstate myself, to be in a due resolution.

Edm. I will seek him, sir, presently; convey

89. *where*, whereas.

108. *unstate myself*, deprive
myself of position and dignity.

108. *to be in a due resolution*,

to have my doubts fully resolved.

109. *convey*, discharge.

King Lear

the business as I shall find means, and acquaint 117
you withal.

Glou. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us: though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects: love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son against father: the king falls from bias of 120
nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: machinations, hollow-ness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders follow us disquietly to our graves. Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall lose thee nothing; do it carefully. And the noble and true-hearted Kent banished! his offence, honesty! 'Tis strange.

[*Exit.*

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune,—often the surfeit of our own behaviour,—we make guilty 130
of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers, by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on: an admirable evasion of whore-master man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star! My father compounded with my mother under the dragon's tail; and my na- 140
tivity was under Ursa major; so that it follows, I am rough and lecherous. Tut, I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star

133. *treachers, betrayers.*

134. *spherical, planetary.*

King Lear

ACT I

in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing.
Edgar—

Enter EDGAR.

and pat he comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy: my cue is villanous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam. O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! fa, sol, la, mi.

Edg. How now, brother Edmund! what serious 150
contemplation are you in?

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edg. Do you busy yourself about that?

Edm. I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed unhappily; as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; 160
needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

Edg. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

Edm. Come, come; when saw you my father last?

Edg. Why, the night gone by.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edg. Ay, two hours together. 170

Edm. Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him by word or countenance?

Edg. None at all.

146. *like the catastrophe of the old comedy.* Probably a reference to the inartificial structure of many early plays, where the conclusion arrived, with little

preparation, when it was wanted.

157. *succeed*, ensue.

161. *diffidences*, suspicions.

164. *sectary astronomical*, a devotee of astrology.

King Lear

Edm. Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him: and at my entreaty forbear his presence till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure; which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong. 180

Edm. That's my fear. I pray you, have a continent forbearance till the speed of his rage goes slower; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak: pray ye, go; there's my key: if you do stir abroad, go armed.

Edg. Armed, brother!

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best; go armed: I am no honest man if there be any good meaning towards you: I have told you what I 190 have seen and heard; but faintly, nothing like the image and horror of it: pray you, away.

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edm. I do serve you in this business.

[*Exit Edgar.*]

A credulous father! and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy! I see the business.
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
All with me's meet that I can fashion fit. [*Exit.* 200

178. *with the mischief of*, with harm to.

179. *allay*, be allayed.

181-188. Qq substantially omit this speech of Edmund's, reading 'That's my fear, brother, I advise you' etc.

King Lear

ACT I

SCENE III. *The Duke of Albany's palace.*

Enter GONERIL, and OSWALD, her steward.

Gon. Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?

Osw. Yes, madam.

Gon. By day and night he wrongs me; every hour

He flashes into one gross crime or other,
That sets us all at odds: I'll not endure it:
His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle. When he returns from hunting,
I will not speak with him; say I am sick:
If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer.

10

Osw. He's coming, madam; I hear him.

[Horns within.]

Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows; I'd have it come to
question:

If he distaste it, let him to our sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
Not to be over-ruled. Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities
That he hath given away! Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again, and must be used
With checks as flatteries, when they are seen
abused.

20

Remember what I tell you.

Osw.

Well, madam.

14. *distaste*, dislike.

16-20. *Not . . . abused.*
Omitted in Ff.

20. 'With reproof instead of,
for [*i.e.* rather than] flatteries,
when flatteries are found to feed
their folly.'

King Lear

Gon. And let his knights have colder looks
among you ;
What grows of it, no matter ; advise your fellows
so :

I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
That I may speak : I'll write straight to my sister,
To hold my very course. Prepare for dinner.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *A hall in the same.*

Enter KENT, disguised.

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech defuse, my good intent
May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I razed my likeness. Now, banish'd
Kent,

If thou canst serve where thou dost stand con-
demn'd,

So may it come, thy master whom thou lovest
Shall find thee full of labours.

*Horns within. Enter LEAR, Knights,
and Attendants.*

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner ; go get
it ready. [*Exit an Attendant.*] How now ! what
art thou ?

10

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess ? what wouldst
thou with us ?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem ;
to serve him truly that will put me in trust ; to
love him that is honest ; to converse with him

2. *defuse, disorder, confuse.*

King Lear

ACT I

that is wise, and says little ; to fear judgement ; to fight when I cannot choose ; and to eat no fish.

Lear. What art thou ?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as 20 poor as the king.

Lear. If thou be as poor for a subject as he is for a king, thou art poor enough. What wouldst thou ?

Kent. Service.

Lear. Who wouldst thou serve ?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow ?

Kent. No, sir ; but you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master. 30

Lear. What's that ?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do ?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly : that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in ; and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou ?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for 40 singing, nor so old to dote on her for any thing : I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Follow me ; thou shalt serve me : if I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet. Dinner, ho, dinner ! Where's my knave ? my fool ? Go you, and call my fool hither.

[Exit an Attendant.]

Enter OSWALD.

You, you, sirrah, where's my daughter ?

Osw. So please you,—

[Exit.]

35. *curious*, complicated.

King Lear

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the
clotpoll back. [*Exit a Knight.*] Where's my
fool, ho? I think the world's asleep. 50

Re-enter Knight.

How now! where's that mongrel?

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is
not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me
when I called him?

Knight. Sir, he answered me in the roundest
manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not! 60

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter
is; but, to my judgement, your highness is not
entertained with that ceremonious affection as
you were wont; there's a great abatement of
kindness appears as well in the general depend-
ants as in the duke himself also and your
daughter.

Lear. Ha! sayest thou so?

Knight. I beseech you, pardon me, my lord,
if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent 70
when I think your highness wronged.

Lear. Thou but rememberest me of mine own
conception: I have perceived a most faint neglect
of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own
jealous curiosity than as a very pretence and pur-
pose of unkindness: I will look further into't.
But where's my fool? I have not seen him this
two days.

Knight. Since my young lady's going into
France, sir, the fool hath much pined away. 80

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well.

73. *faint*, cold.

suspicion.

75. *curiosity*, nicety of 75. *pretence*, deliberate offer.

King Lear

ACT I

Go you, and tell my daughter I would speak with her. [*Exit an Attendant.*] Go you, call hither my fool. [*Exit an Attendant.*]

Re-enter OSWALD.

O, you sir, you, come you hither, sir: who am I, sir?

Osw. My lady's father.

Lear. 'My lady's father'! my lord's knave: you whoreson dog! you slave! you cur!

Osw. I am none of these, my lord; I beseech 90 your pardon.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal? [*Striking him.*]

Osw. I'll not be struck, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripped neither, you base foot-ball player. [*Tripping up his heels.*]

Lear. I thank thee, fellow; thou servest me, and I'll love thee.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away! I'll teach you differences: away, away! If you will measure 100 your lubber's length again, tarry: but away! go to; have you wisdom? so. [*Pushes Oswald out.*]

Lear. Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee: there's earnest of thy service.

[*Giving Kent money.*]

Enter Fool.

Fool. Let me hire him too: here's my coxcomb. [*Offering Kent his cap.*]

Lear. How now, my pretty knave! how dost thou?

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

Kent. Why, fool?

110

105. *coxcomb*, the fool's cap.

King Lear

Fool. Why, for taking one's part that's out of favour: nay, an thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou'lt catch cold shortly: there, take my coxcomb: why, this fellow has banished two on's daughters, and done the third a blessing against his will; if thou follow him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb. How now, nuncle! Would I had two coxcombs and two daughters!

Lear. Why, my boy?

Fool. If I gave them all my living, I'd keep 120 my coxcombs myself. There's mine; beg another of thy daughters.

Lear. Take heed, sirrah; the whip.

Fool. Truth's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipped out, when Lady the brach may stand by the fire and stink.

Lear. A pestilent gall to me!

Fool. Sirrah, I'll teach thee a speech.

Lear. Do.

Fool. Mark it, nuncle:

130

Have more than thou showest,
 Speak less than thou knowest,
 Lend less than thou owest,
 Ride more than thou goest,
 Learn more than thou trowest,
 Set less than thou throwest;
 Leave thy drink and thy whore,
 And keep in-a-door,
 And thou shalt have more
 Than two tens to a score.

140

Kent. This is nothing, fool.

113. *catch cold*, i.e. be turned out.

117. *nuncle*, 'the customary address of a licensed fool to his superiors' (Nares).

125. *Lady the brach*, i.e. the bitch-hound. Malone's reading for Ff 'the Lady Brach.'

131. *showest*, seemest to have.

134. *goest*, walkest.

King Lear

ACT I

Fool. Then 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer; you gave me nothing for't. Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?

Lear. Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.

Fool. [*To Kent*] Prithee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to: he will not believe a fool.

Lear. A bitter fool!

150

Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet fool?

Lear. No, lad; teach me.

Fool. That lord that counsell'd thee

To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me,
Do thou for him stand:

The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear;

The one in motley here,
The other found out there.

160

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy?

Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.

Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord.

Fool. No, faith, lords and great men will not let me; if I had a monopoly out, they would have part on't: and ladies too, they will not let me have all fool to myself; they'll be snatching. Give me an egg, nuncle, and I'll give thee two 170 crowns.

Lear. What two crowns shall they be?

Fool. Why, after I have cut the egg i' the middle, and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When thou clovest thy crown i' the

167. *out*, issued, granted to me.

168. *ladies*; Capell's emendation for Qq 'lodes.'

King Lear

middle, and gavest away both parts, thou borest thy ass on thy back o'er the dirt : thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown, when thou gavest thy golden one away. If I speak like myself in this, let him be whipped that first finds it so. 180

[*Singing*] Fools had ne'er less wit in a year ;

For wise men are grown foppish,
They know not how their wits to wear,
Their manners are so apish.

Lear. When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah ?

Fool. I have used it, nuncle, ever since thou madest thy daughters thy mother : for when thou gavest them the rod, and puttest down thine own breeches, 190

[*Singing*] Then they for sudden joy did weep,

And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
And go the fools among.

Prithee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy fool to lie : I would fain learn to lie.

Lear. An you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipped.

Fool. I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are : they'll have me whipped for speaking 200 true, thou'lt have me whipped for lying ; and sometimes I am whipped for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind o' thing than a fool : and yet I would not be thee, nuncle ; thou hast pared thy wit o' both sides, and left nothing i' the middle : here comes one o' the parings.

Enter GONERIL.

Lear. How now, daughter ! what makes that

189. *puttest*, i.e. didst put.

King Lear

ACT I

frontlet on? Methinks you are too much of late
i' the frown.

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou 210
hadst no need to care for her frowning; now thou
art an O without a figure: I am better than thou
art now; I am a fool, thou art nothing. [*To Gon.*]
Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue; so your
face bids me, though you say nothing. Mum,
mum,

He that keeps nor crust nor crum,
Weary of all, shall want some.

[*Pointing to Lear*] That's a shealed peascod.

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licensed fool, 220
But other of your insolent retinue
Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth
In rank and not to be endured riots. Sir,
I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
To have found a safe redress; but now grow
fearful,

By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance; which if you should, the fault
Would not 'scape censure, nor the redresses sleep,
Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal, 230
Might in their working do you that offence,
Which else were shame, that then necessity
Will call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For, you know, nuncle,
The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it had it head bit off by it young.
So out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. Come, sir,

219. *shealed*, shelled.

230. *in the tender of*, in care
for.

227. *put on*, encourage.

230. *weal* commonwealth.

I would you would make use of that good wisdom, ²⁴⁰
 Whereof I know you are fraught, and put away
 These dispositions that of late transform you
 From what you rightly are.

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart
 draws the horse? Whoop, Jug! I love thee.

Lear. Doth any here know me? This is not
 Lear:

Doth Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are
 his eyes?

Either his notion weakens, his discernings
 Are lethargied—Ha! waking? 'tis not so.

Who is it that can tell me who I am? 250

Fool. Lear's shadow.

Lear. I would learn that; for, by the marks
 of sovereignty, knowledge, and reason, I should
 be false persuaded I had daughters.

Fool. Which they will make an obedient
 father.

Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. This admiration, sir, is much o' the savour
 Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
 To understand my purposes aright: 260

As you are old and reverend, you should be wise.
 Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
 Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd and bold,
 That this our court, infected with their manners,
 Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust
 Make it more like a tavern or a brothel
 Than a graced palace. The shame itself doth
 speak

245. *Whoop, Jug*, etc. Intentional nonsense to cloak his plain speaking. 'Jug' was a colloquial term for a mistress.

248. *notion*, understanding.

252-256. *I would learn . . .*

father. Omitted in Ff. Perhaps originally in verse.

255. *Which*, whom.

263. *debosh'd*, debauched.

267. *graced*, honourable.

King Lear

ACT I

For instant remedy : be then desired
By her that else will take the thing she begs
A little to disquantity your train ;
And the remainder that shall still depend,
To be such men as may besort your age,
And know themselves and you.

270

Lear. Darkness and devils !
Saddle my horses ; call my train together.
Degenerate bastard ! I'll not trouble thee :
Yet have I left a daughter.

Gon. You strike my people, and your disorder'd
rabble
Make servants of their betters.

Enter ALBANY.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents,—[*To Alb.*]
O, sir, are you come ?
Is it your will ? Speak, sir. Prepare my horses. 280
Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child
Than the sea-monster !

Alb. Pray, sir, be patient.

Lear. [*To Gon.*] Detested kite ! thou liest :
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
That all particulars of duty know,
And in the most exact regard support
The worships of their name. O most small fault,
How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show !
That, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature 290
From the fix'd place ; drew from my heart all love,

271. *still depend*, continue to wait on you (the word is suggested by 'train').

272. *besort*, sort with, become.

283. *the sea-monster* ; perhaps the hippopotamus, which

according to Egyptian tradition (accessible to Shakespeare in Holland's translation of Plutarch) 'kills its sire and ravishes its dam' (Wright).

285. *choice and rarest* (the superlative applies to both).

And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear !
Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in,

[*Striking his head.*]

And thy dear judgement out ! Go, go, my people.

Alb. My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant
Of what hath moved you.

Lear. It may be so, my lord.

Hear, nature, hear ; dear goddess, hear !
Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend
To make this creature fruitful !

300

Into her womb convey sterility !
Dry up in her the organs of increase ;
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honour her ! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen ; that it may live
And be a thwart disnatured torment to her !
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth ;
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks ;
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt ; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child ! Away, away ! [*Exit.*]

310

Alb. Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes
this ?

Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause,
But let his disposition have that scope
That dotage gives it.

Re-enter LEAR.

Lear. What, fifty of my followers at a clap !
Within a fortnight !

Alb. What's the matter, sir ?

Lear. I'll tell thee : [*To Gon.*] Life and
death ! I am ashamed

302. *derogate*, degraded.

303. *teem*, give birth.

305. *thwart*, cross, perverse.

King Lear

ACT I

That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus ;
That these hot tears, which break from me per-
force, 320
Should make thee worth them. Blasts and fogs
upon thee !

The untented woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee ! Old fond eyes,
Beweeep this cause again, I'll pluck ye out,
And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
To temper clay. Yea, is it come to this ?
Let it be so : yet have I left a daughter,
Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable :
When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
She'll flay thy wolvisish visage. Thou shalt find 330
That I'll resume the shape which thou dost
think

I have cast off for ever : thou shalt, I warrant thee.

[*Exeunt Lear, Kent, and Attendants.*]

Gon. Do you mark that, my lord ?

Alb. I cannot be so partial, Goneril,
To the great love I bear you,—

Gon. Pray you, content. What, Oswald, ho !
[*To the Fool*] You, sir, more knave than fool, after
your master.

Fool. Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear, tarry and take
the fool with thee.

A fox, when one has caught her, 340
And such a daughter,
Should sure to the slaughter,
If my cap would buy a halter :
So the fool follows after. [*Exit.*]

Gon. This man hath had good counsel : a
hundred knights !
'Tis politic and safe to let him keep

322. *untented*, not to be 328. *comfortable*, ready to
probed by a tent, incurable. comfort.

At point a hundred knights: yes, that on every
dream,

Each buzz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,
He may enguard his dotage with their powers,
And hold our lives in mercy. Oswald, I say! 350

Alb. Well, you may fear too far.

Gon. Safer than trust too far:

Let me still take away the harms I fear,
Not fear still to be taken: I know his heart.
What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister:
If she sustain him and his hundred knights,
When I have show'd the unfitness,—

Re-enter OSWALD.

How now, Oswald

What, have you writ that letter to my sister?

Osw. Yes, madam.

Gon. Take you some company, and away to
horse:

Inform her full of my particular fear; 360
And thereto add such reasons of your own
As may compact it more. Get you gone;
And hasten your return. [*Exit Oswald.*] No,
no, my lord,

This milky gentleness and course of yours
Though I condemn not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more attask'd for want of wisdom
Than praised for harmful mildness.

Alb. How far your eyes may pierce I cannot tell:
Striving to better, oft we mar what's well.

Gon. Nay, then—

Alb. Well, well; the event. [*Exeunt.*] 370

347. *At point*, fully accoutred.

366. *attask'd*, criticised.

King Lear

ACT I

SCENE V. *Court before the same.*

Enter LEAR, KENT, and Fool.

Lear. Go you before to Gloucester with these letters. Acquaint my daughter no further with any thing you know than comes from her demand out of the letter. If your diligence be not speedy, I shall be there afore you.

Kent. I will not sleep, my lord, till I have delivered your letter. [*Exit.*

Fool. If a man's brains were in's heels, were't not in danger of kibes?

Lear. Ay, boy.

20

Fool. Then, I prithee, be merry; thy wit shall ne'er go slip-shod.

Lear. Ha, ha, ha!

Fool. Shalt see thy other daughter will use thee kindly; for though she's as like this as a crab's like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.

Lear. Why, what canst thou tell, my boy?

Fool. She will taste as like this as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i' the middle on's face?

20

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose; that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

Lear. I did her wrong—

Fool. Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

1. *Gloucester*; the city.

15. *kindly* (used equivocally), after her nature.

25. *I did her wrong.* This

and Lear's subsequent ejaculations to himself are in verse; his distracted replies to the Fool in prose.

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

30

Lear. Why?

Fool. Why, to put's head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

Lear. I will forget my nature.—So kind a father!—Be my horses ready?

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight?

40

Fool. Yes, indeed: thou wouldst make a good fool.

Lear. To take't again perforce! Monster ingratitude!

Fool. If thou wert my fool, nuncle, I'd have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How's that?

Fool. Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise.

Lear. O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven!

50

Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!

Enter Gentleman.

How now! are the horses ready?

Gent. Ready, my lord.

Lear. Come, boy.

Fool. She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,

Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter.

[*Exeunt.*

King Lear

ACT II

ACT II.

SCENE I. *The Earl of Gloucester's castle.*

Enter EDMUND, and CURAN meets him.

Edm. Save thee, Curan.

Cur. And you, sir. I have been with your father, and given him notice that the Duke of Cornwall and Regan his duchess will be here with him this night.

Edm. How comes that?

Cur. Nay, I know not. You have heard of the news abroad, I mean the whispered ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments?

Edm. Not I: pray you, what are they? 10

Cur. Have you heard of no likely wars toward, 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany?

Edm. Not a word.

Cur. You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir. [Exit.

Edm. The duke be here to-night? The better! best!

This weaves itself perforce into my business.
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing, of a queasy question,
Which I must act: briefness and fortune, work!
Brother, a word; descend: brother, I say! 20

Enter EDGAR.

My father watches: O sir, fly this place;

9. *arguments*, topics.

19. *of a queasy question*, requiring delicate discussion.

King Lear

Intelligence is given where you are hid ;
 You have now the good advantage of the night :
 Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall?
 He's coming hither, now, i' the night, i' the haste,
 And Regan with him : have you nothing said
 Upon his party 'gainst the Duke of Albany?
 Advise yourself.

Edg. I am sure on 't, not a word.

Edm. I hear my father coming : pardon me ; 30
 In cunning I must draw my sword upon you :
 Draw : seem to defend yourself : now quit you
 well.

Yield : come before my father. Light, ho, here !
 Fly, brother. Torches, torches ! So, farewell.

[*Exit Edgar.*

Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
 [*Wounds his arm.*

Of my more fierce endeavour : I have seen
 drunkards

Do more than this in sport. Father, father !
 Stop, stop ! No help ?

Enter GLOUCESTER, and Servants with torches.

Glou. Now, Edmund, where 's the villain ?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp
 sword out, 40

Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
 To stand 's auspicious mistress,—

Glou. But where is he ?

Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.

Glou. Where is the villain, Edmund ?

Edm. Fled this way, sir. When by no means
 he could—

24. *advantage*, opportunity.

29. *Advise yourself*, reflect.

42. 's ; so Q₁. Q₂ 'his.

Ff omit.

King Lear

ACT II

Glou. Pursue him, ho! Go after. [*Exeunt some Servants.*] By no means what?

Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship;

But that I told him, the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend,
Spoke with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to the father; sir, in fine, 50
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With his prepared sword, he charges home
My unprovided body, lanced mine arm:
But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,
Bold in the quarrel's right, roused to the encounter,
Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
Full suddenly he fled.

Glou. Let him fly far:
Not in this land shall he remain uncaught;
And found—dispatch. The noble duke my master, 60
My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night:
By his authority I will proclaim it,
That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,
Bringing the murderous coward to the stake;
He that conceals him, death.

Edm. When I dissuaded him from his intent,
And found him pight to do it, with curst speech
I threaten'd to discover him: he replied,
'Thou unpossessing bastard! dost thou think,
If I would stand against thee, would the reposal 70
Of any trust, virtue, or worth in thee
Make thy words faith'd? No: what I should
deny,—

51. *how loathly opposite I* called to the conflict.
stood, with what abhorrence I
opposed.

57. *gasted, frightened.*

55. *best alarum'd, vigorously*

67. *pight, of fixed intent.*

King Lear

As this I would ; ay, though thou didst produce
 My very character,—I 'ld turn it all
 To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practice :
 And thou must make a dullard of the world,
 If they not thought the profits of my death
 Were very pregnant and potential spurs
 To make thee seek it.'

Glou. Strong and fasten'd villain !
 Would he deny his letter ? I never got him. 80
[Tucket within.

Hark, the duke's trumpets ! I know not why he
 comes.

All ports I 'll bar ; the villain shall not 'scape ;
 The duke must grant me that : besides, his picture
 I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
 May have due note of him ; and of my land,
 Loyal and natural boy, I 'll work the means
 To make thee capable.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, and Attendants.

Corn. How now, my noble friend ! since I
 came hither,
 Which I can call but now, I have heard strange
 news.

Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too short 90
 Which can pursue the offender. How dost, my
 lord ?

Glou. O, madam, my old heart is crack'd, is
 crack'd !

Reg. What, did my father's godson seek your
 life ?

He whom my father named ? your Edgar ?

Glou. O, lady, lady, shame would have it hid !

78. *pregnant*, ready.

Ff 'said he ?'

79. *fasten'd*, determined.

87. *capable* (of my land),

80. *I never got him* ; so Qq.

legally capable of inheriting it.

King Lear

ACT II

Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous knights

That tend upon my father?

Glou. I know not, madam : 'tis too bad, too bad.

Edm. Yes, madam, he was of that consort.

Reg. No marvel, then, though he were ill-affected :

100

'Tis they have put him on the old man's death,
To have the expense and waste of his revenues.
I have this present evening from my sister
Been well inform'd of them ; and with such cau-
tions,

That if they come to sojourn at my house,
I'll not be there.

Corn. Nor I, assure thee, Regan.

Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
A child-like office.

Edm. 'Twas my duty, sir.

Glou. He did bewray his practice ; and received
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

110

Corn. Is he pursued ?

Glou. Ay, my good lord.

Corn. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm : make your own purpose,
How in my strength you please. For you, Ed-
mund,

Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours :
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need ;
You we first seize on.

Edm. I shall serve you, sir,
Truly, however else.

102. *expense and waste* ; so be no more harm to fear from
Ff. 'Waste and spoil,' Qq. him.'

109. *practice*, (Edgar's) plot. 114. *in my strength*, with the

113. *of*, as to. 'There will aid of my power.'

King Lear

Glou. For him I thank your grace.

Corn. You know not why we came to visit you,— 120

Reg. Thus out of season, threading dark-eyed night :

Occasions, noble Gloucester, of some poise,
Wherein we must have use of your advice :
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I least thought it fit
To answer from our home ; the several messengers
From hence attend dispatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom ; and bestow
Your needful counsel to our business,
Which craves the instant use.

Glou. I serve you, madam : 130
Your graces are right welcome. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Before Gloucester's castle.*

Enter KENT and OSWALD, severally.

Osw. Good dawning to thee, friend : art of this house ?

Kent. Ay.

Osw. Where may we set our horses ?

Kent. I' the mire.

Osw. Prithee, if thou lovest me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Osw. Why, then, I care not for thee.

Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I would make thee care for me. 10

Osw. Why dost thou use me thus ? I know thee not.

Kent. Fellow, I know thee.

122. *poise*, moment, weight. is plausibly guessed to have been

9. *Lipsbury pinfold*. This a cant phrase for *the teeth*—*ἔρκος*
phrase remains unexplained. It *ὀδόντων*.

King Lear

ACT II

Osw. What dost thou know me for?

Kent. A knave; a rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-livered, action-taking knave, a whoreson, glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd, in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch: one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deniest the least syllable of thy addition.

Osw. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one that is neither known of thee nor knows thee!

Kent. What a brazen-faced varlet art thou, to deny thou knowest me! Is it two days ago since I tripped up thy heels and beat thee before the king? Draw, you rogue: for, though it be night, yet the moon shines; I'll make a sop o' the moonshine of you: draw, you whoreson cullionly barber-monger, draw.

[*Drawing his sword.*]

Osw. Away! I have nothing to do with thee.

16. *three-suited*, menial serving-men being allowed a fixed number (usually three suits a year).

17. *hundred-pound*. 'A hundred-pound gentleman' was a current term of contempt, implying pretentious poverty.

18. *worsted-stocking*. Silk stockings were worn by all who could afford it.

19. *action-taking*, seeking redress from the law instead of by the sword; mean-spirited.

19. *glass-gazing*, i.e. foppish. *ib. superserviceable*, 'above his work.'

20. *one-trunk-inheriting*, possessing (and requiring) but one coffer, i.e. only enough clothing for one.

26. *addition*, title.

35. *sop o' the moonshine*, a dish of eggs boiled in oil, known also as 'eggs in moonshine.'

36. *cullionly*, wretched.

ib. barber-monger, fop (as a frequenter of barbers' shops).

King Lear

Kent. Draw, you rascal: you come with letters against the king; and take vanity the puppet's part against the royalty of her father: draw, you 40
rogue, or I'll so carbonado your shanks: draw,
you rascal; come your ways.

Osw. Help, ho! murder! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave; stand, rogue, stand;
you neat slave, strike. [*Beating him.*]

Osw. Help, ho! murder! murder!

Enter EDMUND, with his rapier drawn, CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOUCESTER, and Servants.

Edm. How now! What's the matter?

Kent. With you, goodman boy, an you please:
come, I'll flesh ye; come on, young master.

Glou. Weapons! arms! What's the matter 50
here?

Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives:
He dies that strikes again. What is the matter?

Reg. The messengers from our sister and the
king.

Corn. What is your difference? speak.

Osw. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirred your
valour. You cowardly rascal, nature disclaims
in thee: a tailor made thee. 60

Corn. Thou art a strange fellow: a tailor
make a man?

Kent. Ay, a tailor, sir: a stone-cutter or a
painter could not have made him so ill, though
he had been but two hours at the trade.

39. *vanity the puppet's part.*
'Vanity' was a frequent person-
age in the *Moralities*.

41. *carbonado*, slash across,
like a piece of meat for grill-
ing.

45. *neat*, spruce, finical.

48. *With you*, etc. Kent
pretends to understand 'matter'
as 'ground of quarrel.'

59. *disclaims in*, disowns.

65. *hours*; so Qq. Ff 'years.'

King Lear

ACT II

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Osw. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spared at suit of his gray beard,—

Kent. Thou whoreson zed! thou unnecessary letter! My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar, and daub the walls of a jakes with him. Spare my gray beard, you wagtail? 70

Corn. Peace, sirrah!
You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

Kent. Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain 80
Which are too intrinse to unloose; smooth every passion

That in the natures of their lords rebel;
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;
Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks
With every gale and vary of their masters,
Knowing nought, like dogs, but following.

A plague upon your epileptic visage!

Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?

Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,

I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot. 90

69. *unnecessary letter.* 'Z' was proverbially said to be 'often heard' in English (being written s) 'but seldom seen.'

71. *unbolted*, unsifted, coarse.

72. *jakes*, privy.

81. *intrinse*, tightly knotted.

84. *Renege*, deny.

ib. *turn their halcyon beaks*; alluding to the famous 'vulgar error,' that the kingfisher 'being hanged up in the air by the

neck, his nebbe or bill will be always direct or straight against the wind' (T. Lupton, *Notable Things*, bk. x.).

87. *epileptic*, distorted with a forced grin, as by epilepsy.

88. *Smile*, smile at.

90. *to Camelot*; probably because of the flocks of geese bred in the neighbourhood of Cadbury, the traditional site of Camelot.

King Lear

Corn. What, art thou mad, old fellow?

Glou. How fell you out? say that.

Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy
Than I and such a knave.

Corn. Why dost thou call him knave? What is
his fault?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Corn. No more perchance does mine, nor his,
nor hers.

Kent. Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain :
I have seen better faces in my time
Than stands on any shoulder that I see 100
Before me at this instant.

Corn. This is some fellow,
Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature : he cannot flatter, he,—
An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth !
An they will take it, so ; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends
Than twenty silly ducking observants
That stretch their duties nicely. 110

Kent. Sir, in good sooth, in sincere verity,
Under the allowance of your great aspect,
Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flickering Phœbus' front,—

Corn. What mean'st by this?

Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you
discommend so much. I know, sir, I am no
flatterer : he that beguiled you in a plain accent
was a plain knave ; which for my part I will
not be, though I should win your displeasure to
entreat me to't. 120

109. *observants*, obsequious
courtiers.

110. *nicely*, with punctilious
nicety.

King Lear

ACT II

Corn. What was the offence you gave him?

Osw. I never gave him any :

It pleased the king his master very late
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction ;
When he, conjunct, and flattering his displeasure,
Tripp'd me behind ; being down, insulted, rail'd,
And put upon him such a deal of man,
That worthied him, got praises of the king
For him attempting who was self-subdued ;
And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
Drew on me here again. 130

Kent. None of these rogues and cowards
But Ajax is their fool.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks !
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverend braggart,
We'll teach you—

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn :
Call not your stocks for me : I serve the king ;
On whose employment I was sent to you :
You shall do small respect, show too bold
malice

Against the grace and person of my master,
Stocking his messenger.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks ! As I have life
and honour, 140
There shall he sit till noon.

Reg. Till noon ! till night, my lord ; and all
night too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

Corn. This is a fellow of the self-same colour

124. *upon his misconstruction,* fleshed with.
through his misunderstanding 132. *Ajax is their fool,* a fool
me. in comparison with them.
130. *in the fleshment of,* being 145. *colour,* sort.

King Lear

Our sister speaks of. Come, bring away the stocks ! *[Stocks brought out.]*

Glou. Let me beseech your grace not to do so : His fault is much, and the good king his master Will check him for 't : your purposed low correction Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches 150 For pilferings and most common trespasses Are punish'd with : the king must take it ill, That he, so slightly valued in his messenger, Should have him thus restrain'd.

Corn. I'll answer that.

Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse, To have her gentleman abused, assaulted, For following her affairs. Put in his legs.

[Kent is put in the stocks.]

Come, my good lord, away.

[Exeunt all but Gloucester and Kent.]

Glou. I am sorry for thee, friend ; 'tis the duke's pleasure, Whose disposition, all the world well knows, 160 Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd : I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray, do not, sir : I have watched and travell'd hard ; Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle. A good man's fortune may grow out at heels : Give you good morrow !

Glou. The duke's to blame in this ; 'twill be ill taken. *[Exit.]*

Kent. Good king, that must approve the common saw,

Thou out of heaven's benediction comest
To the warm sun !

161. *rubb'd*, hindered (a term of bowls). tion, etc. ; proverbial, for a change from better to worse.

168. *out of heaven's benedic-*

King Lear

ACT II

Approach, thou beacon to this under globe, 170
 That by thy comfortable beams I may
 Peruse this letter ! Nothing almost sees miracles
 But misery : I know 'tis from Cordelia,
 Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
 Of my obscured course ; and shall find time
 From this enormous state, seeking to give
 Losses their remedies. All weary and o'erwatch'd,
 Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
 This shameful lodging.
 Fortune, good night : smile once more ; turn thy
 wheel ! [Sleeps. 180

SCENE III. *A wood.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd ;
 And by the happy hollow of a tree
 Escaped the hunt. No port is free ; no place,
 That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
 Does not attend my taking. Whiles I may 'scape
 I will preserve myself : and am bethought
 To take the basest and most poorest shape
 That ever penury, in contempt of man,
 Brought near to beast : my face I'll grime with
 filth ;
 Blanket my loins : elf all my hair in knots ; 10
 And with presented nakedness out-face
 The winds and persecutions of the sky.
 The country gives me proof and precedent

175. *shall find time*, etc. *deliver us* or the like).

The most probable solution of
 the obscurity of this sentence is
 that Kent 'weary and o'er-
 watch'd' fails to complete it
 (from this enormous state to

176. *enormous*, abnormal,
 monstrous.

10. *elf*. To mat or tangle
 the hair was a common form of
 fairy vengeance or malice.

Of Bedlam beggars, who with roaring voices
 Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
 Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary ;
 And with this horrible object, from low farms,
 Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes, and mills,
 Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,
 Enforce their charity. Poor Turlygod! poor Tom ! 20
 That's something yet : Edgar I nothing am.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *Before Gloucester's castle. Kent
 in the stocks.*

Enter LEAR, Fool, and Gentleman.

Lear. 'Tis strange that they should so depart
 from home,
 And not send back my messenger.

Gent. As I learn'd,
 The night before there was no purpose in them
 Of this remove.

Kent. Hail to thee, noble master !

Lear. Ha !
 Makest thou this shame thy pastime ?

Kent. No, my lord.

Fool. Ha, ha ! he wears cruel garters. Horses
 are tied by the heads, dogs and bears by the neck,
 monkeys by the loins, and men by the legs : when

14. *Bedlam* beggars ; mad-
 men who having 'come to some
 degree of soberness' were per-
 mitted to go out to beg. A sect
 of the fraternity of vagabonds,
 called 'Abraham men,' throve
 by feigning to be of Bedlam.
 'Poor Tom' and 'Poor Tom' is
 a-cold' were their cant cries.

16. *pricks*, skewers.

18. *pelting*, paltry.

19. *bans*, curses.

20. *Turlygod* ; perhaps an
 English variation of Turlupins—
 the name of a sect of vagabonds
 in the fourteenth century.

7. *cruel* ; with a play upon
 'crewel,' worsted.

King Lear

ACT II

a man's over-lusty at legs, then he wears wooden
nether-stocks. 20

Lear. What's he that hath so much thy place
mistook

To set thee here?

Kent. It is both he and she;

Your son and daughter.

Lear. No.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I say.

Kent. I say, yea.

Lear. No, no, they would not.

Kent. Yes, they have. 20

Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no.

Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay.

Lear. They durst not do't;

They could not, would not do't; 'tis worse than
murder,

To do upon respect such violent outrage:

Resolve me with all modest haste which way

Thou mightst deserve, or they impose, this usage,

Coming from us.

Kent. My lord, when at their home

I did commend your highness' letters to them,

Ere I was risen from the place that show'd

My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post, 30

Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth

From Goneril his mistress salutations;

Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,

Which presently they read: on whose contents,

They summon'd up their meiny, straight took

horse;

Commanded me to follow, and attend

24. *upon respect*, deliberately.

28. *commend*, deliver.

33. *spite of intermission*, not-

withstanding that they thus put
off their audience of Kent.

35. *meiny*, household.

The leisure of their answer ; gave me cold looks :
 And meeting here the other messenger,
 Whose welcome, I perceived, had poison'd mine,—
 Being the very fellow that of late
 Display'd so saucily against your highness,—
 Having more man than wit about me, drew :
 He raised the house with loud and coward cries.
 Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
 The shame which here it suffers.

40

Fool. Winter's not gone yet, if the wild-geese
 fly that way.

Fathers that wear rags
 Do make their children blind ;
 But fathers that bear bags
 Shall see their children kind.
 Fortune, that arrant whore,
 Ne'er turns the key to the poor.

50

But, for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours
 for thy daughters as thou canst tell in a year.

Lear. O, how this mother swells up toward my
 heart !

Hysterica passio, down, thou climbing sorrow,
 Thy element's below ! Where is this daughter ?

Kent. With the earl, sir, here within.

Lear.

Follow me not ;

Stay here.

[*Exit.* 60

Gent. Made you no more offence but what you
 speak of ?

Kent. None.

How chance the king comes with so small a train ?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i' the stocks for
 that question, thou hadst well deserved it.

Kent. Why, fool ?

Fool. We'll set thee to school to an ant, to

56. *this mother*; 'the Mother' a learned, name for the disease
 was a popular, 'hysterica passio' now known as hysteria.

King Lear

ACT II

teach thee there's no labouring i' the winter.
All that follow their noses are led by their eyes 70
but blind men; and there's not a nose among
twenty but can smell him that's stinking. Let
go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill,
lest it break thy neck with following it; but the
great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee
after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel,
give me mine again: I would have none but
knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

That sir which serves and seeks for gain,
And follows but for form, 80
Will pack when it begins to rain,
And leave thee in the storm.
But I will tarry; the fool will stay,
And let the wise man fly:
The knave turns fool that runs away;
The fool no knave, perdy.
Kent. Where learned you this, fool?
Fool. Not i' the stocks, fool.

Re-enter LEAR, with GLOUCESTER.

Lear. Deny to speak with me? They are sick?
they are weary?
They have travell'd all the night? Mere fetches; 90
The images of revolt and flying off.
Fetch me a better answer.

Glou. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the duke;
How unremoveable and fix'd he is
In his own course.

Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!
Fiery? what quality? Why, Gloucester, Gloucester,
I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.

90. *fetches*, subterfuges.

Glou. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.

Lear. Inform'd them! Dost thou understand me, man?

100

Glou. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall;
the dear father

Would with his daughter speak, commands her service:

Are they inform'd of this? My breath and blood!

'Fiery'? 'the fiery duke'? Tell the hot duke that—

No, but not yet: may be he is not well:

Infirmity doth still neglect all office

Whereto our health is bound; we are not ourselves

When nature being oppress'd commands the mind

To suffer with the body: I'll forbear;

110

And am fall'n out with my more headier will,

To take the indisposed and sickly fit

For the sound man. Death on my state! where-

fore

[*Looking on Kent.*

Should he sit here? This act persuades me

That this remotion of the duke and her

Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.

Go tell the duke and's wife I'd speak with them,

Now, presently: bid them come forth and hear me,

Or at their chamber-door I'll beat the drum

Till it cry sleep to death.

120

Glou. I would have all well betwixt you. [*Exit.*

Lear. O me, my heart, my rising heart! but,
down!

Fool. Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to
the eels when she put 'em i' the paste alive; she

107. *office*, duty

112. *To take*, for taking.

115. *remotion*, removal.

123. *cockney*; perhaps here a

cook or cook's assistant; but

there is clearly a reference to

the common sense of a pampered

simpleton.

King Lear

ACT II

knapped 'em o' the coxcombs with a stick, and cried 'Down, wantons, down!' 'Twas her brother that, in pure kindness to his horse, buttered his hay.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOUCESTER, and Servants.

Lear. Good morrow to you both.

Corn. Hail to your grace!
[*Kent is set at liberty.*]

Reg. I am glad to see your highness. 130

Lear. Regan, I think you are; I know what reason

I have to think so: if thou shouldst not be glad, I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb, Sepulchring an adultress. [*To Kent*] O, are you free?

Some other time for that. Beloved Regan, Thy sister's naught: O Regan, she hath tied Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here:
[*Points to his heart.*]

I can scarce speak to thee; thou'lt not believe With how depraved a quality—O Regan!

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience: I have hope 140
You less know how to value her desert Than she to scant her duty.

Lear. Say, how is that?

Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least Would fail her obligation: if, sir, perchance She have restrain'd the riots of your followers, 'Tis on such ground and to such wholesome end As clears her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her!

Reg. O, sir, you are old;
Nature in you stands on the very verge

141, 142. *You less know how, etc.*, you rather fail, etc.

Of her confine : you should be ruled and led 150
 By some discretion, that discerns your state
 Better than you yourself. Therefore, I pray you,
 That to our sister you do make return ;
 Say you have wrong'd her, sir.

Lear. Ask her forgiveness ?
 Do you but mark how this becomes the house :
 'Dear daughter, I confess that I am old ;
[Kneeling.]

Age is unnecessary : on my knees I beg
 That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.'

Reg. Good sir, no more ; these are unsightly
 tricks :

Return you to my sister.

Lear. [Rising] Never, Regan : 160
 She hath abated me of half my train ;
 Look'd black upon me ; struck me with her tongue,
 Most serpent-like, upon the very heart :
 All the stored vengeance of heaven fall
 On her ingrateful top ! Strike her young bones,
 You taking airs, with lameness !

Corn. Fie, sir, fie !

Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding
 flames

Into her scornful eyes ! Infect her beauty,
 You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
 To fall and blast her pride ! 170

Reg. O the blest gods ! so will you wish on me,
 When the rash mood is on.

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my
 curse :

Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give

155. *becomes the house*, suits 170. *blast her pride* ; so Qq.
 the family relationship (of father Ff 'blister.'
 to daughter).

165. *young bones*, i.e. unborn 174. *tender-hefted*, delicately
 child. framed.

King Lear

ACT II

Thee o'er to harshness : her eyes are fierce ; but
thine

Do comfort and not burn. 'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And in conclusion to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in : thou better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude ;
Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd.

180

Reg. Good sir, to the purpose.

Lear. Who put my man i' the stocks ?

[*Tucket within.*

Corn. What trumpet's that ?

Reg. I know't, my sister's : this approves her
letter,

That she would soon be here.

Enter OSWALD.

Is your lady come ?

Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows.
Out, varlet, from my sight !

Corn. What means your grace ? 190

Lear. Who stock'd my servant ? Regan, I have
good hope

Thou didst not know on't. Who comes here ?

Enter GONERIL.

O heavens,

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause ; send down, and take my part !
[*To Gon.*] Art not ashamed to look upon this beard ?

178. *sizes*, allowances.

194. *Allow*, approve of.

King Lear

O Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand?

Gon. Why not by the hand, sir? How have
I offended?

All's not offence that indiscretion finds
And dotage terms so.

Lear. O sides, you are too tough; 200
Will you yet hold? How came my man i' the stocks?

Corn. I set him there, sir: but his own disorders
Deserved much less advancement.

Lear. You! did you?

Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.
If, till the expiration of your month,
You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me:
I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd? 210
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' the air;
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl,—
Necessity's sharp pinch! Return with her?
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot. Return with her?
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
To this detested groom. [*Pointing at Oswald.*]

Gon. At your choice, sir. 220

Lear. I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad:
I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell:
We'll no more meet, no more see one another:
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
Or rather a disease that's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine: thou art a boil,
A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle,

227. embossed, swollen.

King Lear

ACT II

In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee ;
 Let shame come when it will, I do not call it :
 I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
 Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove :
 Mend when thou canst ; be better at thy leisure :
 I can be patient ; I can stay with Regan,
 I and my hundred knights.

230

Reg. Not altogether so :
 I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
 For your fit welcome. Give ear, sir, to my sister ;
 For those that mingle reason with your passion
 Must be content to think you old, and so—
 But she knows what she does.

Lear. Is this well spoken ?

Reg. I dare avouch it, sir : what, fifty followers ?
 Is it not well ? What should you need of more ?
 Yea, or so many, sith that both charge and danger
 Speak 'gainst so great a number ? How, in one
 house,

240

Should many people, under two commands,
 Hold amity ? 'Tis hard ; almost impossible.

Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive
 attendance

From those that she calls servants or from mine ?

Reg. Why not, my lord ? If then they chanced
 to slack you,

We could control them. If you will come to me,
 For now I spy a danger, I entreat you
 To bring but five and twenty : to no more
 Will I give place or notice.

250

Lear. I gave you all—

Reg. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Made you my guardians, my depositaries,
 But kept a reservation to be follow'd
 With such a number. What, must I come to you

254. *guardians, stewards, trustees.*

With five and twenty, Regan? said you so? .

Reg. And speak't again, my lord; no more with me.

Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd,

When others are more wicked; not being the worst

Stands in some rank of praise. [*To Gon.*] I'll go with thee :

Thy fifty yet doth double five-and-twenty,
And thou art twice her love.

Gon. Hear me, my lord :

What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?

Reg. What need one?

Lear. O, reason not the need : our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous :

Allow not nature more than nature needs,

Man's life's as cheap as beast's : thou art a lady ; 270

If only to go warm were gorgeous,

Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But, for true
need,—

You heavens, give me that patience, patience I
need !

You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,

As full of grief as age ; wretched in both !

If it be you that stirs these daughters' hearts

Against their father, fool me not so much

To bear it tamely ; touch me with noble anger,

And let not women's weapons, water-drops, 280

Stain my man's cheeks ! No, you unnatural hags,

I will have such revenges on you both

That all the world shall—I will do such things,—

268. *superfluous*, possessed of more than they need.

King Lear

ACT II

What they are, yet I know not, but they shall be
The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep;
No, I'll not weep:
I have full cause of weeping; but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,
Or ere I'll weep. O fool, I shall go mad!

[Exeunt Lear, Gloucester, Kent, and Fool.]

Storm and tempest.

Corn. Let us withdraw; 'twill be a storm.

290

Reg. This house is little: the old man and
his people

Cannot be well bestow'd.

Gon. 'Tis his own blame; hath put himself
from rest,

And must needs taste his folly.

Reg. For his particular, I'll receive him gladly,
But not one follower.

Gon. So am I purposed.

Where is my lord of Gloucester?

Corn. Follow'd the old man forth: he is re-
turn'd.

Re-enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. The king is in high rage.

Corn. Whither is he going?

Glou. He calls to horse; but will I know not
whither.

300

Corn. 'Tis best to give him way; he leads
himself.

Gon. My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.

Glou. Alack, the night comes on, and the bleak
winds

Do sorely ruffle; for many miles about
There's scarce a bush.

288. *flaws*, shivers.

far as he is concerned.

295. *For his particular*, so

304. *ruffle*, bluster.

King Lear

Reg. O, sir, to wilful men,
 The injuries that they themselves procure
 Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors :
 He is attended with a desperate train ;
 And what they may incense him to, being apt
 To have his ear abused, wisdom bids fear. 310

Corn. Shut up your doors, my lord ; 'tis a
 wild night :
 My Regan counsels well : come out o' the storm.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A heath.*

*Storm still. Enter KENT and a Gentleman,
 meeting.*

Kent. Who's there, besides foul weather ?

Gent. One minded like the weather, most un-
 quietly.

Kent. I know you. Where's the king ?

Gent. Contending with the fretful elements ;
 Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
 Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main,
 That things might change or cease ; tears his
 white hair,
 Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
 Catch in their fury, and make nothing of ;
 Strives in his little world of man to out-scorn 10
 The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
 This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,

7-15. *tears . . . take all.* 12. *cub-drawn, with udders*
 Omitted in Ff. drawn dry, famished.

King Lear

ACT III

The lion and the belly-pinched wolf
Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
And bids what will take all.

Kent. But who is with him?

Gent. None but the fool; who labours to out-
jest

His heart-struck injuries.

Kent. Sir, I do know you;

And dare, upon the warrant of my note,
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
Although as yet the face of it be cover'd

20

With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
Who have—as who have not, that their great stars
Throned and set high?—servants, who seem no
less,

Which are to France the spies and speculations
Intelligent of our state; what hath been seen,
Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes,
Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
Against the old kind king; or something deeper,
Whereof perchance these are but furnishings;

But, true it is, from France there comes a power
Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet

30

In some of our best ports, and are at point
To show their open banner. Now to you:

If on my credit you dare build so far
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
Some that will thank you, making just report
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow
The king hath cause to plain.

I am a gentleman of blood and breeding;

40

18. *note*, information.

19. *dear*, momentous.

24. *speculations*, observers,

26. *snuffs and packings*, quarrels and plots.

29. *furnishings*, outward symptoms, guise.

And from some knowledge and assurance offer
This office to you.

Gent. I will talk further with you.

Kent.

No, do not.

For confirmation that I am much more
Than my out-wall, open this purse, and take
What it contains. If you shall see Cordelia,—
As fear not but you shall,—show her this ring,
And she will tell you who your fellow is
That yet you do not know. Fie on this storm!
I will go seek the king.

50

Gent. Give me your hand: have you no more
to say?

Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet;
That, when we have found the king,—in which
your pain
That way, I'll this,—he that first lights on him
Holla the other.

[*Exeunt severally*]

SCENE II. *Another part of the heath. Storm still.*

Enter LEAR and Fool.

Lear. Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks!
rage! blow!

You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the
cocks!

You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking
thunder,

52. *to*, as *to*.

53. *pain*, i.e. labour of search
(lies).

2. *hurricanoes*, waterspouts.

4. *thought-executing*, doing
execution with the speed of
thought.

5. *Vaunt-couriers*, heralds.

King Lear

ACT III

Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world !
Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,
That make ingrateful man !

Fool. O nuncle, court holy-water in a dry 10
house is better than this rain-water out o' door.
Good nuncle, in, and ask thy daughters' blessing :
here's a night pities neither wise man nor fool.

Lear. Rumble thy bellyful ! Spit, fire ! spout,
rain !

Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters :
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness ;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children ;
You owe me no subscription : then let fall
Your horrible pleasure ; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak and despised old man : 20
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. O ! O ! 'tis foul !

Fool. He that has a house to put's head in
has a good head-piece.

The cod-piece that will house
Before the head has any,
The head and he shall louse ;
So beggars marry many. 30
The man that makes his toe
What he his heart should make
Shall of a corn cry woe,
And turn his sleep to wake.

For there was never yet fair woman but she made
mouths in a glass.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 7. <i>Smite</i> , so Qq ; Ff 'strike.' | Ff 'will . . . join.' |
| 8. <i>spill</i> , destroy. | 23. <i>high-engender'd battles</i> , |
| 10. <i>court holy-water</i> , flattery. | battalions engendered in the air. |
| 18. <i>subscription</i> , submission. | 27. <i>cod-piece</i> , a part of male |
| 22. <i>have</i> . . . <i>join'd</i> ; so Qq. | dress. |

King Lear

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience ;
I will say nothing.

Enter KENT.

Kent. Who's there ?

Fool. Marry, here's grace and a cod-piece ; 40
that's a wise man and a fool.

Kent. Alas, sir, are you here ? things that love
night

Love not such nights as these ; the wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves : since I was man,
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard : man's nature cannot
carry

The affliction nor the fear.

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads, 50
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
Unwhipp'd of justice : hide thee, thou bloody hand ;
Thou perjured, and thou simular man of virtue
That art incestuous : caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practised on man's life : close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents, and cry
These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man
More sinn'd against than sinning.

Kent. Alack, bare-headed ! 60
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel ;
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest :

40. *grace*, the king's grace. simulator of virtue ; so Qq.

44. *Gallow*, terrify. Ff 'simular of virtue.'

54. *simular man of virtue*,

58. *concealing continents*,
shrouds of secrecy. L.

King Lear

ACT III

Repose you there ; while I to this hard house—
More harder than the stones whereof 'tis raised ;
Which even but now, demanding after you,
Denied me to come in—return, and force
Their scanted courtesy.

Lear. My wits begin to turn.
Come on, my boy : how dost, my boy ? art cold ?
I am cold myself. Where is this straw, my fellow ?
The art of our necessities is strange, 70
That can make vile things precious. Come, your
hovel.

Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
That's sorry yet for thee.

Fool. [Singing] He that has and a little tiny
wit,—

With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,—
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
For the rain it raineth every day.

Lear. True, my good boy. Come, bring us to
this hovel. [*Exeunt Lear and Kent.*]

Fool. This is a brave night to cool a courtesan.
I'll speak a prophecy ere I go : 80

When priests are more in word than matter ;
When brewers mar their malt with water ;
When nobles are their tailors' tutors ;
No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors ;
When every case in law is right ;
No squire in debt, nor no poor knight ;
When slanders do not live in tongues ;
Nor cutpurses come not to throngs ;
When usurers tell their gold i' the field ;

part

74-77. This is perhaps a familiar verses known as
variant of the Clown's song in 'Chaucer's Prophecy.' Lines
Twelfth Night (end). 90, 91 there appear as :—

79-95. This is wanting in Qq,
and probably spurious.

Then shall the realm of Albion
Be brought to great confusion.

81 f. A parody of the then

And bawds and whores do churches build :

90

Then shall the realm of Albion

Come to great confusion :

Then comes the time, who lives to see 't,

future

That going shall be used with feet.

This prophecy Merlin shall make ; for I live before
his time. [Exit.

SCENE III. *Gloucester's castle.*

Enter GLOUCESTER and EDMUND.

Glou. Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing. When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house ; charged me, on pain of their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

Edm. Most savage and unnatural !

Glou. Go to ; say you nothing. There's a division betwixt the dukes ; and a worse matter than that : I have received a letter this night ; 'tis dangerous to be spoken ; I have locked the letter in my closet : these injuries the king now bears will be revenged home ; there's part of a power already footed : we must incline to the king. I will seek him, and privily relieve him : go you and maintain talk with the duke, that my charity be not of him perceived : if he ask for me, I am ill and gone to bed. Though I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the king my old master must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund ; pray you, be careful. 20
[Exit.

Edm. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke Instantly know ; and of that letter too :

King Lear

ACT III

This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me
That which my father loses ; no less than all :
The younger rises when the old doth fall. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *The heath. Before a hovel.*

Enter LEAR, KENT, and Fool.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord ; good my lord,
enter :

The tyranny of the open night's too rough
For nature to endure. [*Storm still.*

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Wilt break my heart ?

Kent. I had rather break mine own. Good my
lord, enter.

Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much that this con-
tentious storm

Invades us to the skin : so 'tis to thee ;

But where the greater malady is fix'd,

The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'ldst shun a bear ;

But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea,

Thou'ldst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the
mind's free,

The body's delicate : the tempest in my mind

Doth from my senses take all feeling else

Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude !

Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand

For lifting food to't ? But I will punish home.

No, I will weep no more. In such a night

To shut me out ! Pour on ; I will endure.

In such a night as this ! O Regán, Goneril !

Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave you
all,—

King Lear

O, that way madness lies ; let me shun that ;
No more of that.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Prithee, go in thyself ; seek thine own
ease :

This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more. But I'll go in.
[*To the Fool*] In, boy ; go first. You houseless
poverty,—

Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.

[*Fool goes in.*]

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides, 30
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these ? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this ! Take physic, pomp ;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.

Edg. [*Within*] Fathom and half, fathom and
half ! Poor Tom !

[*The Fool runs out from the hovel.*]

Fool. Come not in here, nuncle, here's a spirit.
Help me, help me ! 40

Kent. Give me thy hand. Who's there ?

Fool. A spirit, a spirit : he says his name's
poor Tom.

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there
i' the straw ? Come forth.

Enter EDGAR disguised as a madman.

Edg. Away ! the foul fiend follows me !
Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.
Hum ! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.

King Lear

ACT III

Lear. Hast thou given all to thy two daughters?
And art thou come to this?

50

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor Tom?
whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and
through flame, and through ford and whirlpool,
o'er bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives
under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set rats-
bane by his porridge; made him proud of heart,
to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched
bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor.
Bless thy five wits! Tom's a-cold,—O, do de,
do de, do de. Bless thee from whirlwinds, star- 60
blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some charity,
whom the foul fiend vexes: there could I have
him now,—and there,—and there again, and
there. [*Storm still.*]

Lear. What, have his daughters brought him to
this pass?
Couldst thou save nothing? Didst thou give them
all?

Fool. Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had
been all shamed

Lear. Now, all the plagues that in the pen-
dulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults light on thy daughters! 70

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have sub-
dued nature
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.
Is it the fashion that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot

54, 55. *laid knives under his pillow*, etc. Malone quotes from Harsnett's *Declaration* a story of an apothecary who used this method of tempting to

suicide.

60. *star-blasting*, being 'star-struck,' i.e. blighted by the influence of the stars.

61. *taking*, infection

Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill :

Halloo, halloo, loo, loo !

Fool. This cold night will turn us all to fools 80
and madmen.

Edg. Take heed o' the foul fiend : obey thy
parents ; keep thy word justly ; swear not ; com-
mit not with man's sworn spouse ; set not thy
sweet heart on proud array. Tom's a-cold.

Lear. What hast thou been ?

Edg. A serving-man, proud in heart and mind ;
that curled my hair ; wore gloves in my cap ;
served the lust of my mistress' heart, and did the 90
act of darkness with her ; swore as many oaths as
I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face
of heaven : one that slept in the contriving of lust,
and waked to do it : wine loved I deeply, dice
dearly ; and in woman out-paramoured the Turk :
false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand ; hog
in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in
madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of
shoes nor the rustling of silks betray thy poor
heart to woman : keep thy foot out of brothels,
thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lenders' 100
books, and defy the foul fiend.

'Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind.'

Says suum, mun, ha, no, nonny.

Dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa ! let him trot by.

[*Storm still.*]

Lear. Why, thou wert better in thy grave than
to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity
of the skies. Is man no more than this ? Con-

77. *pelican daughters* ; since
the young of the pelican fed
upon the parent's blood.

78. *Pillicock.* A nursery term
equivalent to 'a pretty knave' ;

here suggested by 'pelican.'

88. *gloves*, as ladies' favours.

97. *prey*, preying.

104. *sessa* ; 'on !' a term of
incitement to speed.

King Lear

ACT III

sider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk,
the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no
perfume. Ha! here's three on's are sophisti- 110
cated! Thou art the thing itself: unaccom-
modated man is no more but such a poor, bare,
forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings!
come, unbutton here. [*Tearing off his clothes.*]

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, be contented; 'tis a
naughty night to swim in. Now a little fire in a
wild field were like an old lecher's heart; a small
spark, all the rest on's body cold. Look, here
comes a walking fire.

Enter GLOUCESTER, with a torch.

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet: 120
he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock;
he gives the web and the pin, squints the eye, and
makes the hare-lip; mildews the white wheat, and
hurts the poor creature of earth.

S. Withold footed thrice the old;

He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;

Bid her alight,

And her troth plight,

And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!

Kent. How fares your grace?

130

Lear. What's he?

109. *cat*, civet cat.

110. *sophisticated*, adulterated.

111. *unaccommodated*, unfurnished with necessities.

120. *Flibbertigibbet*; like 'Smulking,' 'Modo,' 'Mahu,' and 'Frateretto' below, the name of a fiend recognised in the demonology of the time. All four are mentioned in, and perhaps borrowed from, Harsnett's *Declaration of Popish*

Impostures (1603).

122. *the web and the pin*, cata-ract.

122. *squints*, makes squint.

125. *S. Withold*, Saint Vitalis, whose aid was invoked against nightmare.

125. *old*, wold.

126. *nine-fold*, nine familiars (in the form of 'foals').

129. *aroint thee*, away with thee.

King Lear

Kent. Who's there? What is't you seek?

Glou. What are you there? Your names?

Edg. Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt and the water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipped from tithing to tithing, and stock-punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear;

But mice and rats, and such small deer,

Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

Beware my follower. Peace, Smulking; peace, thou fiend!

Glou. What, hath your grace no better company?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman: Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.

Glou. Our flesh and blood is grown so vile, my lord,

That it doth hate what gets it.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.

Glou. Go in with me: my duty cannot suffer To obey in all your daughters' hard commands: Though their injunction be to bar my doors, And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you, Yet have I ventured to come seek you out, And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher. What is the cause of thunder?

135. *wall-newt*, lizard.

137. *sallets*, salads.

144, 145. From 'Sir Bevis of Hamptoun':—

Rattes and myce and suche small
dere

Was his meate that seven yere.

144. *deer*, game.

King Lear

ACT III

Kent. Good my lord, take his offer ; go into the house.

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban.

What is your study ?

Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you one word in private.

Kent. Importune him once more to go, my lord ; His wits begin to unsettle.

Glou. Canst thou blame him ? [*Storm still.* His daughters seek his death : ah, that good Kent ! He said it would be thus, poor banish'd man ! Thou say'st the king grows mad ; I'll tell thee, friend,

170

I am almost mad myself : I had a son, Now outlaw'd from my blood ; he sought my life, But lately, very late : I loved him, friend, No father his son dearer : truth to tell thee, The grief hath crazed my wits. What a night's this !

I do beseech your grace,—

Lear. O, cry you mercy, sir. Noble philosopher, your company.

Edg. Tom's a-cold.

Glou. In, fellow, there, into the hovel : keep thee warm.

Lear. Come, let's in all.

Kent. This way, my lord.

Lear. With him ; 180

I will keep still with my philosopher.

Kent. Good my lord, soothe him ; let him take the fellow.

Glou. Take him you on.

Kent. Sirrah, come on ; go along with us.

Lear. Come, good Athenian.

King Lear

Glou. No words, no words: hush.

Edg. Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still 'Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man.'

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Gloucester's castle.*

Enter CORNWALL and EDMUND.

Corn. I will have my revenge ere I depart his house.

Edm. How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.

Corn. I now perceive, it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking merit, set a-work by a reproveable badness in himself.

Edm. How malicious is my fortune, that I 10
must repent to be just! This is the letter he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France. O heavens! that this treason were not, or not I the detector!

Corn. Go with me to the duchess.

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

Corn. True or false, it hath made thee earl of Gloucester. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension. 20

187-189. *Child Rowland.* by Mr. Jacobs into interesting connexion with Comus (*English Fairy Tales*).

188. *His word*, i.e. the giant's.
8. *provoking*, impelling.

King Lear

ACT III

Edm. [*Aside*] If I find him comforting the king, it will stuff his suspicion more fully.—I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee; and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *A chamber in a farmhouse adjoining the castle.*

Enter GLOUCESTER, LEAR, KENT, Fool, and EDGAR.

Glou. Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully. I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can: I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits have given way to his impatience: the gods reward your kindness! [*Exit Gloucester.*]

Edg. Frateretto calls me; and tells me Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, tell me whether a mad-man be a gentleman or a yeoman? 10

Lear. A king, a king!

Fool. No, he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son; for he's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits
Come hissing in upon 'em,—

Edg. The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. He's mad that trusts in the tameness

21. *comforting, giving aid to.*

King Lear

of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a 20
whore's oath.

Lear. It shall be done; I will arraign them
straight.

[*To Edgar*] Come, sit thou here, most learned
justicer;

[*To the Fool*] Thou, sapient sir, sit here. Now,
you she foxes!

Edg. Look, where he stands and glares!
Wantest thou eyes at trial, madam?

Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me.

Fool. Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak

Why she dares not come over to thee.

30

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the
voice of a nightingale. Hopdance cries in Tom's
belly for two white herring. Croak not, black
angel; I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so
amazed:

Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I'll see their trial first. Bring in the
evidence.

[*To Edgar*] Thou robed man of justice, take thy
place;

[*To the Fool*] And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity,
Bench by his side: [*To Kent*] you are o' the
commission,

40

20. *a horse's health*; the horse
being held peculiarly subject to
disease.

27. *Come o'er the bourn*,
Bessy, etc. Part of a ballad
written by Birch in the year of
the queen's accession: 'A Songe
betwene the Quenes Majestie
and Englande.' England begins
the dialogue, addressing Eliza-

beth in the line quoted.

32. *Hopdance*, the name of a
fiend, probably the 'Hoberdi-
dance' mentioned by Harsnett
with Flibbertigibbet.

33. *white herring*, fresh
herrings.

40. *Bench*, occupy the judge's
seat.

King Lear

ACT III

Sit you too.

Edg. Let us deal justly.

Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?

Thy sheep be in the corn;

And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,

Thy sheep shall take no harm.

Pur! the cat is gray.

Lear. Arraign her first; 'tis Goneril. I here take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.

50

Fool. Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint stool.

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim

What store her heart is made on. Stop her there! Arms, arms, sword, fire! Corruption in the place!

False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

Edg. Bless thy five wits!

60

Kent. O pity! Sir, where is the patience now, That you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. [*Aside*] My tears begin to take his part so much,

They'll mar my counterfeiting.

Lear. The little dogs and all,

Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at them. Avaunt, you curs!

Be thy mouth or black or white,

Tooth that poisons if it bite;

70

Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,

45. *minikin*, dainty

King Lear

Hound or spaniel, brach or lym,
 Or bobtail tike or trundle-tail,
 Tom will make them weep and wail;
 For, with throwing thus my head,
 Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

Do de, de, de. Sessa! Come, march to wakes
 and fairs and market-towns. Poor Tom, thy horn
 is dry.

Lear. Then let them anatomize Regan; see 80
 what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause
 in nature that makes these hard hearts? [*To Ed-*
gar] You, sir, I entertain for one of my hundred;
 only I do not like the fashion of your garments:
 you will say they are Persian attire; but let them
 be changed.

Kent. Now, good my lord, lie here and rest
 awhile.

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise; draw
 the curtains: so, so, so. We'll go to supper i' the 90
 morning. So, so, so.

Fool. And I'll go to bed at noon.

Re-enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. Come hither, friend: where is the king
 my master?

Kent. Here, sir; but trouble him not: his wits
 are gone.

72. *lym*, a hound held in
 leash, usually applied to the
 bloodhound. Qq 'him'; Ff
 'hym.'

73. *trundle-tail*, curly-tailed
 dog.

78. *thy horn is dry*. Aubrey
 relates that 'Bedlam beggars
 . . . wore about their necks a
 great horn of an ox, in a string

or bawdrick, which when they
 came to a house they did wind,
 and they put the drink given to
 them into this horn.' Edgar
 uses the beggar's phrase with the
 subtler sense that his game is
 played out.

85. *Persian attire*, i.e.
 peculiarly rich and splendid;
 the irony of madness.

King Lear

ACT III

Glou. Good friend, I prithee, take him in thy arms ;

I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him :
There is a litter ready ; lay him in 't,
And drive towards Dover, friend, where thou shalt
meet

Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master :
If thou shouldst dally half an hour, his life, 100
With thine, and all that offer to defend him,
Stand in assured loss. Take up, take up ;
And follow me, that will to some provision
Give thee quick conduct.

Kent. Oppressed nature sleeps :
This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken sinews,
Which, if convenience will not allow,
Stand in hard cure. [*To the Fool*] Come, help
to bear thy master ;
Thou must not stay behind.

Glou. Come, come, away.
[*Exeunt all but Edgar.*]

Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes. 110
Who alone suffers suffers most i' the mind,
Leaving free things and happy shows behind :
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip,
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend makes the king
bow,
He childed as I father'd ! Tom, away !
Mark the high noises ; and thyself bewray,
When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles
thee,
In thy just proof, repeals and reconciles thee. 120

104-108. *Oppressed . . . be-*
kind. Omitted in Ff.

109-122. *When . . . lurk.*
Omitted in Ff.

King Lear

What will hap more to-night, safe 'scape the king !
Lurk, lurk. [*Exit.*

SCENE VII. *Gloucester's castle.*

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GONERIL, EDMUND,
and Servants.

Corn. Post speedily to my lord your husband ;
show him this letter : the army of France is
landed. Seek out the villain Gloucester.

[*Exeunt some of the Servants.*

Reg. Hang him instantly.

Gon. Pluck out his eyes.

Corn. Leave him to my displeasure. Edmund,
keep you our sister company : the revenges we
are bound to take upon your traitorous father are
not fit for your beholding. Advise the duke,
where you are going, to a most festinate prepara- 10
tion : we are bound to the like. Our posts shall
be swift and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell,
dear sister : farewell, my lord of Gloucester

Enter OSWALD.

How now ! where's the king ?

Osw. My lord of Gloucester hath convey'd him
hence :

Some five or six and thirty of his knights,
Hot questrists after him, met him at gate ;
Who, with some other of the lords dependants,
Are gone with him towards Dover ; where they
boast

To have well-armed friends.

Corn. Get horses for your mistress. 20

17. *questrists*, searchers.

King Lear

ACT III

Gon. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

Corn. Edmund, farewell.

[*Exeunt Goneril, Edmund, and Oswald.*]

Go seek the traitor Gloucester,
Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us.

[*Exeunt other Servants.*]

Though well we may not pass upon his life
Without the form of justice, yet our power
Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men
May blame, but not control. Who's there? the
traitor?

Enter GLOUCESTER, brought in by two or three.

Reg. Ingrateful fox! 'tis he.

Corn. Bind fast his corky arms.

Glou. What mean your graces? Good my
friends, consider

30

You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.—

Corn. Bind him, I say. [*Servants bind him.*]

Reg. Hard, hard. O filthy traitor!

Glou. Unmerciful lady as you are, I'm none.

Corn. To this chair bind him. Villain, thou
shalt find— [*Regan plucks his beard.*]

Glou. By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done
To pluck me by the beard.

Reg. So white, and such a traitor!

Glou. Naughty lady,

These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,
Will quicken, and accuse thee: I am your host:

With robbers' hands my hospitable favours
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?

40

Corn. Come, sir, what letters had you late from
France?

29. corky, dry, sapless, as
with age.

40. my hospitable favours,
the features of your host.

King Lear

Reg. Be simple answerer, for we know the truth.

Corn. And what confederacy have you with the traitors

Late footed in the kingdom?

Reg. To whose hands have you sent the lunatic king?

Speak.

Glou. I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,
And not from one opposed.

Corn. Cunning.

Reg. And false.

Corn. Where hast thou sent the king? 50

Glou. To Dover.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not charged at peril—

Corn. Wherefore to Dover? Let him first answer that.

Glou. I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover, sir?

Glou. Because I would not see thy cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes, nor thy fierce sister
In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
In hell-black night endured, would have buoy'd up, 60
And quench'd the stelled fires:
Yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain.
If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,
Thou shouldst have said 'Good porter, turn the
key,'

All cruels else subscribed: but I shall see

43. *simple*, straightforward.

61. *stelled*, starry.

64. *shouldst*, wouldst.

65. *All cruels else subscribed*,
condoning all their cruelties.

For Qq 'subscribed' Ff have
'subscribe.' This gives a
plausible text, 'all cruels else
subscribe' being then best
understood with Schmidt as a

King Lear

ACT III

The winged vengeance overtake such children.

Corn. See't shalt thou never. Fellows, hold the chair.

Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.

Glou. He that will think to live till he be old,
Give me some help! O cruel! O you gods! 70

Reg. One side will mock another; the other too.

Corn. If you see vengeance,—

First Serv. Hold your hand, my lord:
I have served you ever since I was a child;
But better service have I never done you
Than now to bid you hold.

Reg. How now, you dog!

First Serv. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I'd shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean?

Corn. My villain! [*They draw and fight.*]

First Serv. Nay, then, come on, and take the chance of anger.

Reg. Give me thy sword. A peasant stand up thus! 80

[*Takes a sword, and runs at him behind.*]

First Serv. O, I am slain! My lord, you have one eye left

To see some mischief on him. O! [*Dies.*]

Corn. Lest it see more, prevent it. Out, vile jelly!

Where is thy lustre now?

Glou. All dark and comfortless. Where's my son Edmund?

Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,

general statement: 'Everything which is at other times cruel shows feeling or regard, you alone have not done so.' But this makes Gloster shift his ground rather awkwardly. He has just urged that even Cornwall would pity wolves (though not men); he would now argue: Cornwall alone among cruel men has no pity.

To quit this horrid act.

Reg.

Out, treacherous villain !

Thou call'st on him that hates thee : it was he
That made the overture of thy treasons to us ;
Who is too good to pity thee.

90

Glou. O my follies ! then Edgar was abused.

Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him !

Reg. Go thrust him out at gates, and let him
smell

His way to Dover. [*Exit one with Gloucester.*]

How is 't, my lord ? how look you ?

Corn. I have received a hurt : follow me, lady.
Turn out that eyeless villain ; throw this slave
Upon the dunghill. Regan, I bleed apace :
Untimely comes this hurt : give me your arm.

[*Exit Cornwall, led by Regan.*]

Sec. Serv. I 'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man come to good.

Third Serv.

If she live long,

100

And in the end meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.

Sec. Serv. Let's follow the old earl, and get
the Bedlam

To lead him where he would : his roguish madness
Allows itself to any thing.

Third Serv. Go thou : I 'll fetch some flax and
whites of eggs

To apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help
him !

[*Exeunt severally.*]

89. overture, disclosure.

101. old, familiar, natural.

King Lear

ACT IV

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The heath.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace!
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to thy blasts. But who comes here?

Enter GLOUCESTER, *led by an Old Man.*

My father, poorly led? World, world, O world! 10
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.

Old Man. O, my good lord, I have been your
tenant, and your father's tenant, these fourscore
years.

Glou. Away, get thee away; good friend, be
gone:
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;
Thee they may hurt.

Old Man. Alack, sir, you cannot see your way.

Glou. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes; 20
I stumbled when I saw: full oft 'tis seen,
Our means secure us, and our mere defects

22. *Our means secure us, our advantages make us careless.*

King Lear

Prove our commodities. Ah, dear son Edgar,
The food of thy abused father's wrath!
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I 'ld say I had eyes again!

Old Man. How now! Who's there?

Edg. [Aside] O gods! Who is't can say 'I
am at the worst'?

I am worse than e'er I was.

Old Man. 'Tis poor mad Tom.

Edg. [Aside] And worse I may be yet: the
worst is not

So long as we can say 'This is the worst.'

30

Old Man. Fellow, where goest?

Glou. Is it a beggar-man?

Old Man. Madman and beggar too.

Glou. He has some reason, else he could not beg.

I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw;
Which made me think a man a worm: my son
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard
more since.

As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods,
They kill us for their sport.

Edg. [*Aside*] How should this be?

Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Angering itself and others.—Bless thee, master!

40

Glou. Is that the naked fellow?

Old Man. Ay, my lord.

Glou. Then, prithee, get thee gone: if for my
sake

Thou wilt o'ertake us hence a mile or twain
I' the way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Who I 'll entreat to lead me.

Old Man. Alack, sir, he is mad.

King Lear

ACT IV

Glou. 'Tis the times' plague, when madmen
lead the blind.

Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure ;
Above the rest, be gone.

Old Man. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I
have,

Come on 't what will. [*Exit.*

Glou. Sirrah, naked fellow,—

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold. [*Aside*] I cannot
daub it further.

Glou. Come hither, fellow.

Edg. [*Aside*] And yet I must.—Bless thy sweet
eyes, they bleed.

Glou. Know'st thou the way to Dover ?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-
path. Poor Tom hath been scared out of his good
wits : bless thee, good man's son, from the foul
fiend ! five fiends have been in poor Tom at once ;
of lust, as Obidicut ; Hobbididance, prince of
dumbness ; Mahu, of stealing ; Modo, of murder ;
Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing, who
since possesses chambermaids and waiting-women.
So, bless thee, master !

Glou. Here, take this purse, thou whom the
heavens' plagues

Have humbled to all strokes : that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier : heavens, deal so still !

Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,

That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly ;

So distribution should undo excess,

And each man have enough. Dost thou know
Dover ?

61-66. *five fiends* , . . grimacing.

master. Omitted in Ff.

71. *slaves*, tramples on, over-

64. *mopping and mowing*, rides.

Edg. Ay, master.

Glou. There is a cliff, whose high and bending
head

Looks fearfully in the confined deep :

Bring me but to the very brim of it,

And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear

With something rich about me : from that place 80

I shall no leading need.

Edg.

Give me thy arm :

Poor Tom shall lead thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Before the Duke of Albany's palace.*

Enter GONERIL and EDMUND.

Gon. Welcome, my lord : I marvel our mild
husband

Not met us on the way.

Enter OSWALD.

Now, where's your master ?

Osw. Madam, within ; but never man so
changed.

I told him of the army that was landed ;

He smiled at it : I told him you were coming ;

His answer was 'The worse : ' of Gloucester's
treachery,

And of the loyal service of his son,

When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot,

And told me I had turn'd the wrong side out :

What most he should dislike seems pleasant to him ; 10

What like, offensive.

Gon. [*To Edm.*] Then shall you go no further.

It is the cowish terror of his spirit,

That dares not undertake : he'll not feel wrongs

12. *cowish*, cowardly.

King Lear

ACT IV

Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the
way

May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother ;
Hasten his musters and conduct his powers :
I must change arms at home, and give the distaff
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
Shall pass between us : ere long you are like to
hear,

If you dare venture in your own behalf, 20
A mistress's command. Wear this ; spare speech ;
[*Giving a favour.*

Decline your head : this kiss, if it durst speak,
Would stretch thy spirits up into the air :
Conceive, and fare thee well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.

Gon. My most dear Gloucester!
[*Exit Edmund.*

O, the difference of man and man !
To thee a woman's services are due :
My fool usurps my body.

Osw. Madam, here comes my lord.
[*Exit.*

Enter ALBANY.

Gon. I have been worth the whistle.

Alb. O Goneril !

You are not worth the dust which the rude wind 30
Blows in your face. I fear your disposition :
That nature, which contemns it origin,
Cannot be border'd certain in itself ;
She that herself will sliver and disbranch
From her material sap, perforce must wither
And come to deadly use.

28. *My fool usurps my body ;* usurps my head,' 'my foot
so Ff. Qq vary between 'a fool usurps my body.'
usurps my bed,' 'my foot 34. *sliver*, strip off.

King Lear

Gon. No more ; the text is foolish.

Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile :
 Filths savour but themselves. What have you done ?
 Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd ? 40
 A father, and a gracious aged man,
 Whose reverence even the head-lugg'd bear would
 lick,
 Most barbarous, most degenerate ! have you
 madded.
 Could my good brother suffer you to do it ?
 A man, a prince, by him so benefited !
 If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
 Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
 It will come,
 Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
 Like monsters of the deep.

Gon. Milk-liver'd man ! 50
 That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs ;
 Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
 Thine honour from thy suffering ; that not know'st
 Fools do those villains pity who are punish'd
 Ere they have done their mischief. Where's thy
 drum ?

France spreads his banners in our noiseless land,
 With plumed helm thy state begins to threat ;
 Whiles thou, a moral fool, sit'st still, and criest
 'Alack, why does he so ?'

Alb. See thyself, devil !
 Proper deformity seems not in the fiend 60
 So horrid as in woman.

Gon. O vain fool !

Alb. Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame,

39. *savour but*, have a relish depravity.
 only for. 62-68. *Thou . . . mew.*

42. *head-lugg'd*, drawn by the Omitted in Ff.

head. 62. *self-cover'd*, who hast put

60. *Proper deformity*, innate on this fiendlike disguise.

King Lear

ACT IV

Be-monster not thy feature. Were 't my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood,
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
Thy flesh and bones : howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.

Gon. Marry, your manhood mew—

Enter a Messenger.

Alb. What news?

Mess. O, my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's
dead,

70

Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Gloucester.

Alb. Gloucester's eyes !

Mess. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
Opposed against the act, bending his sword
To his great master ; who thereat enraged
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead,
But not without that harmful stroke, which since
Hath pluck'd him after.

Alb. This shows you are above,
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge ! But, O poor Gloucester ! 80
Lost he his other eye ?

Mess. Both, both, my lord.
This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer ;
'Tis from your sister.

Gon. [*Aside*] One way I like this well ;

65. *apt*, ready.

68. *your manhood mew*,
suppress it. This is the reading
of some copies of Q₁. Others
'now' for 'mew.'

73. *remorse*, pity.

74. *bending . . . to*, turning
upon.

79. *nether*, earthly.

84. *One way* ; in so far as
Cornwall's death removed an
obstacle to her ambition. The
'other way,' in which the news
was less welcome, she expressed
in the next two lines, and thence
reverts, in 'another way the news
is not so tart,' to the first.
'One way' and 'another way'
are therefore the same.

King Lear

But being widow, and my Gloucester with her,
 May all the building in my fancy pluck
 Upon my hateful life: another way,
 The news is not so tart.—I'll read, and answer.

[*Exit.*

Alb. Where was his son when they did take his
 eyes?

Mess. Come with my lady hither.

Alb. He is not here. 90

Mess. No, my good lord; I met him back again.

Alb. Knows he the wickedness?

Mess. Ay, my good lord; 'twas he inform'd
 against him;

And quit the house on purpose, that their punish-
 ment

Might have the freer course.

Alb. Gloucester, I live

To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the king,
 And to revenge thine eyes. Come hither, friend:
 Tell me what more thou know'st. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The French camp near Dover.*

Enter KENT and a Gentleman.

Kent. Why the King of France is so suddenly
 gone back know you the reason?

Gent. Something he left imperfect in the state,
 which since his coming forth is thought of;
 which imports to the kingdom so much fear and
 danger, that his personal return was most re-
 quired and necessary.

Kent. Who hath he left behind him general?

91. *back*, on his way back.

Sc. 3. The scene is omitted in Ff.

King Lear

ACT IV

Gent. The Marshal of France, Monsieur La Far. 10

Kent. Did your letters pierce the queen to any demonstration of grief?

Gent. Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my presence;

And now and then an ample tear trill'd down
Her delicate cheek: it seem'd she was a queen
Over her passion; who, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.

Kent. O, then it moved her.

Gent. Not to a rage: patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears 20
Were like, a better way: those happy smilets
That play'd on her ripe lip seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes; which parted thence,
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd. In brief,
Sorrow would be a rarity most beloved,
If all could so become it.

Kent. Made she no verbal question?

Gent. 'Faith, once or twice she heaved the
name of 'father'
Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;
Cried 'Sisters! sisters! Shame of ladies! sisters!
Kent! father! sisters! What, i' the storm? i'
the night? 30

Let pity not be believed!' There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And clamour moisten'd: then away she started
To deal with grief alone.

Kent. It is the stars,

21. *Were like, a better way,* modern editors. Among con-
i.e. like sunshine and rain, but jectural emendations are
after a fairer sort. This is sub- Warburton's 'a wetter May,'
stantially the explanation of Malone's 'a better May.'
Bowden, adopted by most 21. *smilets,* smiles.

The stars above us, govern our conditions ;
 Else one self mate and mate could not beget
 Such different issues. You spoke not with her
 since?

Gent. No.

Kent. Was this before the king return'd?

Gent. No, since.

Kent. Well, sir, the poor distressed Lear's i'
 the town ;

40

Who sometime in his better tune remembers
 What we are come about, and by no means
 Will yield to see his daughter.

Gent. Why, good sir?

Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him : his
 own unkindness,

That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her
 To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
 To his dog-hearted daughters, these things sting
 His mind so venomously, that burning shame
 Detains him from Cordelia.

Gent. Alack, poor gentleman !

Kent. Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you
 heard not?

50

Gent. 'Tis so, they are afoot.

Kent. Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master
 Lear,

And leave you to attend him : some dear cause
 Will in concealment wrap me up awhile ;
 When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
 Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go
 Along with me.

[*Exeunt.*

36. *self*, self-same.

46. *foreign casualties*, the hazards of life abroad.

King Lear

ACT IV

SCENE IV. *The same. A tent.*

*Enter, with drum and colours, CORDELIA,
Doctor, and Soldiers.*

Cor. Alack, 'tis he : why, he was met even now
As mad as the vex'd sea ; singing aloud ;
Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds,
With hor-docks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn. A century send forth ;
Search every acre in the high-grown field,
And bring him to our eye. [*Exit an Officer.*]

What can man's wisdom
In the restoring his bereaved sense ?
He that helps him take all my outward worth. 20

Doct. There is means, madam :
Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks ; that to provoke in him,
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.

Cor. All blest secrets,
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears ! be aidant and remediate
In the good man's distress ! Seek, seek for him ;
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. News, madam ; 20
The British powers are marching hitherward.

3. <i>fumiter</i> , fumitory.	haps burdocks.
4. <i>hor-docks</i> , a plant not yet satisfactorily identified. So Qq.	4. <i>cuckoo-flowers</i> , cowslips.
Ff 'hardokes,' 'hardocks.' Per-	6. <i>A century</i> , a troop of a hundred men.

Cor. 'Tis known before ; our preparation stands
 In expectation of them. O dear father,
 It is thy business that I go about ;
 Therefore great France
 My mourning and important tears hath pitied.
 No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
 But love, dear love, and our aged father's right :
 Soon may I hear and see him ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Gloucester's castle.**Enter REGAN and OSWALD.**Reg.* But are my brother's powers set forth ?*Osw.* Ay, madam.*Reg.* Himself in person there ?*Osw.* Madam, with much ado :
 Your sister is the better soldier.*Reg.* Lord Edmund spake not with your lord
 at home ?*Osw.* No, madam.*Reg.* What might import my sister's letter to
 him ?*Osw.* I know not, lady.

Reg. 'Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.
 It was great ignorance, Gloucester's eyes being out,
 To let him live : where he arrives he moves 10
 All hearts against us : Edmund, I think, is gone,
 In pity of his misery, to dispatch
 His nighted life ; moreover, to descry
 The strength o' the enemy.

Osw. I must needs after him, madam, with my
 letter.*Reg.* Our troops set forth to-morrow : stay with
 us ;26. *important*, importunate.

King Lear

ACT IV

The ways are dangerous.

Osw.

I may not, madam :

My lady charged my duty in this business.

Reg. Why should she write to Edmund? Might
not you

Transport her purposes by word? Belike, 20
Something—I know not what : I'll love thee much,
Let me unseal the letter.

Osw.

Madam, I had rather—

Reg. I know your lady does not love her
husband ;

I am sure of that : and at her late being here
She gave strange œillades and most speaking looks
To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.

Osw. I, madam?

Reg. I speak in understanding ; you are, I
know't :

Therefore I do advise you, take this note :
My lord is dead ; Edmund and I have talk'd ; 30
And more convenient is he for my hand
Than for your lady's : you may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you, give him this ;
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.
So, fare you well.

If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

Osw. Would I could meet him, madam ! I
should show

What party I do follow.

Reg. Fare thee well. [*Exeunt.* 40

25. *œillades*. Qq 'aliads' ; anglicised form of it.
Ff 'eliads,' 'iliads.' It cannot
be decided whether Shakespeare
wrote the French word or some of this, 29. take this note, take note

SCENE VI. *Fields near Dover.*

Enter GLOUCESTER, and EDGAR dressed like a peasant.

Glou. When shall we come to the top of that same hill?

Edg. You do climb up it now: look, how we labour.

Glou. Methinks the ground is even.

Edg. Horrible steep.

Hark, do you hear the sea?

Glou. No, truly.

Edg. Why then your other senses grow imperfect

By your eyes' anguish.

Glou. So may it be, indeed:

Methinks thy voice is alter'd, and thou speak'st

In better phrase and matter than thou didst.

Edg. You're much deceived: in nothing am I changed

But in my garments.

Glou. Methinks you're better spoken. 10

Edg. Come on, sir; here's the place: stand still. How fearful

And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!

The crows and choughs that wing the midway air

Show scarce so gross as beetles: half way down

Hangs one that gathers samphire, dreadful trade!

Methinks he seems no bigger than his head:

The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,

Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark,

15. *samphire*, a plant that Elizabethan spellings were
thrives on the chalk cliffs of the 'sampire' (so Ff, Q₁, Q₂),
south coast. The current 'sampler.'

King Lear

ACT IV

Diminish'd to her cock ; her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight : the murmuring surge, 20
That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more ;
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.

Glou. Set me where you stand.

Edg. Give me your hand : you are now within
a foot

Of the extreme verge : for all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.

Glou. Let go my hand,

Here, friend, 's another purse ; in it a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking : fairies and gods
Prosper it with thee ! Go thou farther off ; 30
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Now fare you well, good sir.

Glou. With all my heart.

Edg. Why I do trifle thus with his despair
Is done to cure it.

Glou. [*Kneeling*] O you mighty gods !
This world I do renounce, and in your sights
Shake patiently my great affliction off :
If I could bear it longer and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and loathed part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O bless him ! 40
Now, fellow, fare thee well. [*He falls forward.*]

Edg. Gone, sir : farewell.

And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life, when life itself
Yields to the theft : had he been where he thought,

21. *unnumber'd*, countless.

39. *snuff*, spent and flickering
old age.

42. *conceit*, illusory belief.
'The illusion of death may be
so powerful that death itself
occurs.'

King Lear

By this had thought been past. Alive or dead?

Ho, you sir! friend! Hear you, sir! speak!

Thus might he pass indeed: yet he revives.

What are you, sir?

Glou. Away, and let me die.

Edg. Hadst thou been aught but gossamer,
feathers, air,

So many fathom down precipitating, 50

Thou'dst shiver'd like an egg: but thou dost
breathe;

Hast heavy substance; bleed'st not; speak'st;
art sound.

Ten masts at each make not the altitude

Which thou hast perpendicularly fell:

Thy life's a miracle. Speak yet again

Glou. But have I fall'n, or no?

Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky
bourn.

Look up a-height; the shrill-gorged lark so far

Cannot be seen or heard: do but look up.

Glou. Alack, I have no eyes. 60

Is wretchedness deprived that benefit,

To end itself by death? 'Twas yet some comfort,

When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,

And frustrate his proud will.

Edg. Give me your arm:

Up: so. How is't? Feel you your legs? You
stand.

Glou. Too well, too well.

Edg. This is above all strangeness.

Upon the crown o' the cliff, what thing was that

Which parted from you?

Glou. A poor unfortunate beggar.

53. *at each*, fastened together (against the sea).
one by one; set end to end. 58. *shrill-gorged*, shrill-
57. *bourn*, limit, barrier throated.

King Lear

ACT IV

Edg. As I stood here below, methought his eyes

Were two full moons ; he had a thousand noses, 70
Horns whelk'd and waved like the enridged sea :
It was some fiend ; therefore, thou happy father,
Think that the clearest gods, who make them
honours

Of men's impossibilities, have preserved thee.

Glow. I do remember now : henceforth I'll bear
Affliction till it do cry out itself

'Enough, enough,' and die. That thing you
speak of,

I took it for a man ; often 'twould say

'The fiend, the fiend : ' he led me to that place.

Edg. Bear free and patient thoughts. But who
comes here ? 80

*Enter LEAR, fantastically dressed with wild
flowers.*

The safer sense will ne'er accommodate
His master thus.

Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coining ;
I am the king himself.

Edg. O thou side-piercing sight !

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect.
There's your press-money. That fellow handles
his bow like a crow-keeper : draw me a clothier's
yard. Look, look, a mouse ! Peace, peace ; this

71. *whelk'd*, protruding like
whelks, or pustules.

73. *clearest*, most pure.

80. *free*, innocent.

81. *The safer sense*, i.e. sanity.

86 f. In what follows Lear
imagines himself first collecting
recruits, then testing them at
archery ; then from the 'crow-
keeper' fancy wanders to

mouse-catching, back to battle
('Bring up the brown bills'),
falconry, and archery again.

88. *like a crow-keeper*, like
one who scares crows from a
field. Ascham describes among
'awkward shooters' one who
'cowreth down and layeth out
his buttocks as though he would
shoot at crows.'

piece of toasted cheese will do't. There's my ⁹⁰
gauntlet; I'll prove it on a giant. Bring up the
brown bills. O, well flown, bird! i' the clout, i'
the clout: hewgh! Give the word.

Edg. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

Glou. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! Goneril, with a white beard!
They flattered me like a dog; and told me I had
white hairs in my beard ere the black ones were
there. To say 'ay' and 'no' to every thing that ¹⁰⁰
I said!—'Ay' and 'no' too was no good divinity.
When the rain came to wet me once, and the
wind to make me chatter; when the thunder
would not peace at my bidding; there I found
'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not
men o' their words: they told me I was every
thing; 'tis a lie, I am not ague-proof.

Glou. The trick of that voice I do well re-
member:
Is't not the king?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king:
When I do stare, see how the subject quakes. ¹¹⁰
I pardon that man's life. What was thy cause?
Adultery?

Thou shalt not die: die for adultery! No:
The wren goes to 't, and the small gilded fly
Does lecher in my sight.
Let copulation thrive; for Gloucester's bastard son
Was kinder to his father than my daughters
Got 'tween the lawful sheets.

To't, luxury, pell-mell! for I lack soldiers.
Behold yond simpering dame, ¹²⁰
Whose face between her forks presages snow;

92. *brown bills*, halberds.
92. *clout*, the white centre of the target.

That minces virtue, and does shake the head
 To hear of pleasure's name ;
 The fitchew, nor the soiled horse, goes to 't
 With a more riotous appetite.
 Down from the waist they are Centaurs,
 Though women all above :
 But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
 Beneath is all the fiends' ;
 There 's hell, there 's darkness, there 's the sulphur-
 ous pit,
 Burning, scalding, stench, consumption ; fie, fie,
 fie ! pah, pah ! Give me an ounce of civet, good
 apothecary, to sweeten my imagination : there 's
 money for thee.

130

Glou. O, let me kiss that hand !

Lear. Let me wipe it first ; it smells of mor-
 tality.

Glou. O ruin'd piece of nature ! This great
 world

Shall so wear out to nought. Dost thou know me ?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough.
 Dost thou squiny at me ? No, do thy worst, 140
 blind Cupid ; I 'll not love. Read thou this chal-
 lenge ; mark but the penning of it.

Glou. Were all the letters suns, I could not see
 one.

Edg. I would not take this from report ; it is,
 And my heart breaks at it.

Lear. Read.

Glou. What, with the case of eyes ?

Lear. O, ho, are you there with me ? No
 eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse ?

124. *fitchew*, pole-cat.

the first flush of grass.'

ib. *soiled horse* ; 'a horse
 that has been fed with hay and
 corn during the winter, and is
 turned out in the spring to take

137. *piece*, masterpiece.

140. *squiny*, squint.

148. *are you there with me*,
 'is that what you mean ?'

Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a ¹⁵⁰
light : yet you see how this world goes.

Glou. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how
this world goes with no eyes. Look with thine
ears : see how yond justice rails upon yond simple
thief. Hark, in thine ear : change places ; and,
handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the
thief? Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a
beggar?

Glou. Ay, sir.

160

Lear. And the creature run from the cur?
There thou mightst behold the great image of
authority : a dog's obeyed in office.

Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand !

Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own
back ;

Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind

For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs
the cozener.

Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear ;
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with
gold,

And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks ; ¹⁷⁰

Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.

None does offend, none, I say, none ; I'll able
'em :

Take that of me, my friend, who have the power

To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes ;

And, like a scurvy politician, seem

To see the things thou dost not. Now, now, now,
now :

Pull off my boots : harder, harder : so.

157. *handy-dandy*, a sleight hand to the other.

of hand, by which a thing is ^{172.} *able*, warrant, answer
imperceptibly changed from one for.

King Lear

ACT IV

Edg. O, matter and impertinency mix'd !
Reason in madness !

Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my
eyes. 180

I know thee well enough ; thy name is Gloucester :
Thou must be patient ; we came crying hither :
Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air,
We wawl and cry. I will preach to thee : mark.

Glou. Alack, alack the day !

Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are
come

To this great stage of fools : this' a good block ;
It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe
A troop of horse with felt : I'll put't in proof ;
And when I have stol'n upon these sons-in-law, 190
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill !

Enter a Gentleman, with Attendants.

Gent. O, here he is : lay hand upon him. Sir,
Your most dear daughter—

Lear. No rescue ? What, a prisoner ? I am
even

The natural fool of fortune. Use me well ;
You shall have ransom. Let me have a surgeon ;
I am cut to the brains.

Gent. You shall have any thing.

Lear. No seconds ? all myself ?

Why, this would make a man a man of salt,
To use his eyes for garden water-pots, 200
Ay, and laying autumn's dust.

Gent. Good sir,—

Lear. I will die bravely, like a smug bridegroom.
What !

178. *impertinency*, irrelevance,
unreason.

187. *this*', this is.

187. *block*, probably shape of
felt hat ; this suggests the next
fancy.

King Lear

I will be jovial : come, come ; I am a king,
My masters, know you that.

Gent. You are a royal one, and we obey you.

Lear. Then there's life in't. Nay, if you get
it, you shall get it with running. Sa, sa, sa, sa.

[*Exit running ; Attendants follow.*]

Gent. A sight most pitiful in the meanest
wretch,
Past speaking of in a king ! Thou hast one
daughter,

Who redeems nature from the general curse 210
Which twain have brought her to.

Edg. Hail, gentle sir.

Gent. Sir, speed you : what's your will ?

Edg. Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward ?

Gent. Most sure and vulgar : every one hears
that,

Which can distinguish sound.

Edg. But, by your favour,
How near's the other army ?

Gent. Near and on speedy foot ; the main descry
Stands on the hourly thought.

Edg. I thank you, sir : that's all.

Gent. Though that the queen on special cause
is here,
Her army is moved on.

Edg. I thank you, sir. 220

[*Exit Gent.*]

Glou. You ever-gentle gods, take my breath
from me ;

Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
To die before you please !

Edg. Well pray you, father.

Glou. Now, good sir, what are you ?

214. *vulgar*, widely known. the discovery of the main body

217. *the main descry*, etc., is hourly expected.

King Lear

ACT IV

Edg. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's
blows ;

Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
I'll lead you to some biding.

Glou. Hearty thanks :
The bounty and the benison of heaven
To boot, and boot !

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. A proclaim'd prize ! Most happy ! ²³⁰
That eyeless head of thine was first framed flesh
To raise my fortunes. Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember : the sword is out
That must destroy thee.

Glou. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to 't. [*Edgar interposes.*]

Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant,
Darest thou support a publish'd traitor ? Hence !
Lest that the infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.

Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without vurther
'casion. 240

Osw. Let go, slave, or thou diest !

Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait, and let
poor volk pass. An chud ha' bin zwaggered out
of my life, 'twould not ha' bin zo long as 'tis by a
vortnight. Nay, come not near th' old man ;
keep out, che vor ye, or ise try whether your
costard or my ballow be the harder : chill be
plain with you.

227. *pregnant*, easily moved.

230. *To boot, and boot.* By
the repetition Gloster wishes to
convey both meanings of 'to
boot,' 'in addition (to my
thanks)' and '(the bounty of

heaven) be your help.'

233. *thyself remember*, recall
and confess thy sins.

246. *che vor ye*, I warn you.

247. *ballow*, cudgel.

King Lear

Osw. Out, dunghill ! [*They fight.*]

Edg. Chill pick your teeth, zir : come ; no 250
matter vor your foins. [*Oswald falls.*]

Osw. Slave, thou hast slain me : villain, take
my purse :

If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body ;
And give the letters which thou find'st about me
To Edmund earl of Gloucester ; seek him out
Upon the British party : O, untimely
Death ! [*Dies.*]

Edg. I know thee well : a serviceable villain,
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress
As badness would desire.

Glou. What, is he dead ?

Edg. Sit you down, father ; rest you. 260

Let's see these pockets : the letters that he
speaks of

May be my friends. He's dead ; I am only sorry
He had no other deathsman. Let us see :

Leave, gentle wax ; and, manners, blame us not :
To know our enemies' minds, we'd rip their
hearts ;

Their papers, is more lawful.

[*Reads*] 'Let our reciprocal vows be remem-
bered. You have many opportunities to cut him
off : if your will want not, time and place will be
fruitfully offered. There is nothing done, if he 270
return the conqueror : then am I the prisoner,
and his bed my gaol ; from the loathed warmth
whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your
labour.

'Your—wife, so I would say—

'affectionate servant,

'GONERIL.'

251. *foins*, thrusts in fencing.

263. *deathsman*, executioner.

276. *servant*, lover.

King Lear

ACT IV

O undistinguish'd space of woman's will !
 A plot upon her virtuous husband's life ;
 And the exchange my brother ! Here, in the sands, 280
 Thee I'll rake up, the post unsanctified
 Of murderous lechers : and in the mature time
 With this ungracious paper strike the sight
 Of the death-practised duke : for him 'tis well
 That of thy death and business I can tell.

Glou. The king is mad : how stiff is my vile
 sense,

That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
 Of my huge sorrows ! Better I were distract :
 So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
 And woes by wrong imaginations lose 290
 The knowledge of themselves.

Edg. Give me your hand :
 [Drum afar off.]

Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum :
 Come, father, I'll bestow you with a friend.
 [Exeunt.]

SCENE VII. *A tent in the French camp.* LEAR
on a bed asleep, soft music playing ; Gentle-
man, and others attending.

Enter CORDELIA, KENT, and Doctor.

Cor. O thou good Kent, how shall I live and
 work,
 To match thy goodness ? My life will be too short
 And every measure fail me.

Kent. To be acknowledged, madam, is o'erpaid.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 278. <i>undistinguish'd space,</i> | bury. |
| boundless compass. | 284. <i>death-practised,</i> whose |
| 278. <i>will,</i> desire. | death was plotted. |
| 281. <i>rake up,</i> cover over, | 287. <i>ingenious,</i> quick, lively. |

King Lear

All my reports go with the modest truth ;
Nor more nor clipp'd, but so.

Cor. Be better suited :
These weeds are memories of those worser hours :
I prithee, put them off.

Kent. Pardon me, dear madam ;
Yet to be known shortens my made intent :
My boon I make it, that you know me not
Till time and I think meet. 10

Cor. Then be't so, my good lord. [*To the Doctor*] How does the king ?

Doct. Madam, sleeps still.

Cor. O you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature !
The untuned and jarring senses, O, wind up
Of this child-changed father !

Doct. So please your majesty
That we may wake the king : he hath slept long.

Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and
proceed

I' the sway of your own will. Is he array'd ? 20

Gent. Ay, madam ; in the heaviness of his sleep
We put fresh garments on him.

Doct. Be by, good madam, when we do awake
him ;

I doubt not of his temperance.

Cor. Very well.

Doct. Please you, draw near. Louder the music
there !

Cor. O my dear father ! Restoration hang
Thy medicine on my lips ; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters

6. *suit*ed, attired.

I had formed.

7. *memories*, memorials.

17. *child-changed*, changed
by the conduct of children.

9. *my made intent*, the plan

24. *temperance*, calmness.

King Lear

ACT IV

Have in thy reverence made !

Kent. Kind and dear princess !

Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes

30

Had challenged pity of them. Was this a face
To be opposed against the warring winds ?
To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder ?
In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick, cross lightning ? to watch—poor perdu !—
With this thin helm ? Mine enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that
night

Against my fire ; and wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw ? Alack, alack !
'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all. He wakes ; speak to him.

40

Doct. Madam, do you ; 'tis fittest.

Cor. How does my royal lord ? How fares
your majesty ?

Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o' the
grave :

Thou art a soul in bliss ; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.

Cor. Sir, do you know me ?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know : when did you
die ?

Cor. Still, still, far wide !

50

Doct. He's scarce awake : let him alone awhile.

Lear. Where have I been ? Where am I ?
Fair daylight ?

I am mightily abused. I should e'en die with pity,
To see another thus. I know not what to say.

33-36. *To stand . . . helm ;* 42. *concluded all*, altogether
omitted in Ff. come to an end.

King Lear

I will not swear these are my hands : let's see ;
 I feel this pin prick. Would I were assured
 Of my condition !

Cor. O, look upon me, sir,
 And hold your hands in benediction o'er me :
 No, sir, you must not kneel.

Lear. Pray, do not mock me :
 I am a very foolish fond old man, 60
 Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less ;
 And, to deal plainly,
 I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
 Methinks I should know you, and know this man ;
 Yet I am doubtful : for I am mainly ignorant
 What place this is, and all the skill I have
 Remembers not these garments, nor I know not
 Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me ;
 For, as I am a man, I think this lady
 To be my child Cordelia.

Cor. And so I am, I am. 70

Lear. Be your tears wet ? yes, 'faith. I pray,
 weep not :
 If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
 I know you do not love me ; for your sisters
 Have, as I do remember, done me wrong :
 You have some cause, they have not.

Cor. No cause, no cause.

Lear. Am I in France ?

Kent. In your own kingdom, sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Doct. Be comforted, good madam ; the great
 rage,
 You see, is kill'd in him : and yet it is danger
 To make him even o'er the time he has lost. 80
 Desire him to go in ; trouble him no more
 Till further settling.

80. *make him even o'er*, bridge over in memory, remember clearly.

King Lear

ACT V

Cor. Will 't please your highness walk?

Lear. You must bear with me :
Pray you now, forget and forgive : I am old and foolish.

[*Exeunt all but Kent and Gentleman.*

Gent. Holds it true, sir, that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain?

Kent. Most certain, sir.

Gent. Who is conductor of his people?

Kent. As 'tis said, the bastard son of Gloucester.

Gent. They say Edgar, his banished son, is ⁹
with the Earl of Kent in Germany.

Kent. Report is changeable. 'Tis time to look about ; the powers of the kingdom approach apace.

Gent. The arbitrement is like to be bloody.
Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Kent. My point and period will be thoroughly wrought,
Or well or ill, as this day's battle's fought. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *The British camp, near Dover.*

*Enter, with drum and colours, EDMUND,
REGAN, Gentlemen, and Soldiers.*

Edm. Know of the duke if his last purpose hold.
Or whether since he is advised by aught
To change the course : he's full of alteration

85-98. *Holds . . . fought.* Omitted in Ff.

King Lear

And self-reproving : bring his constant pleasure.

[*To a Gentleman, who goes out.*]

Reg. Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

Edm. 'Tis to be doubted, madam.

Reg. Now, sweet lord,

You know the goodness I intend upon you :

Tell me, but truly, but then speak the truth,

Do you not love my sister ?

Edm. In honour'd love.

Reg. But have you never found my brother's way 10
To the forfended place ?

Edm. That thought abuses you.

Reg. I am doubtful that you have been conjunct
And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.

Edm. No, by mine honour, madam.

Reg. I never shall endure her : dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.

Edm. Fear me not.—

She and the duke her husband !

*Enter, with drum and colours, ALBANY,
GONERIL, and Soldiers.*

Gon. [*Aside*] I had rather lose the battle than
that sister
Should loosen him and me.

Alb. Our very loving sister, well be-met. 20
Sir, this I hear ; the king is come to his daughter,
With others whom the rigour of our state
Forced to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant : for this business,
It toucheth us, as France invades our land,
Not bolds the king, with others, whom, I fear,

4. *constant pleasure*, fixed resolve. 26. *Not bolds the king*, i.e. not (in so far as France) supports

13. *bosom'd*, taken into her confidence. the king.

King Lear

ACT V

Most just and heavy causes make oppose.

Edm. Sir, you speak nobly.

Reg. Why is this reason'd?

Gon. Combine together 'gainst the enemy;

For these domestic and particular broils

30

Are not the question here.

Alb.

Let's then determine

With the ancient of war on our proceedings.

Edm. I shall attend you presently at your tent.

Reg. Sister, you'll go with us?

Gon. No.

Reg. 'Tis most convenient; pray you, go with us.

Gon. [*Aside*] O, ho, I know the riddle.—I will go.

As they are going out, enter EDGAR disguised.

Edg. If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,

Hear me one word.

Alb.

I'll overtake you. Speak.

[*Exeunt all but Albany and Edgar.*

Edg. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter. 40

If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it: wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouched there. If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,
And machination ceases. Fortune love you!

Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.

Edg.

I was forbid it.

When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again.

Alb. Why, fare thee well: I will o'erlook thy paper.

[*Exit Edgar.* 50

32. *the ancient of war*, soldiers of experience.

36. *convenient*, expedient.

King Lear

Re-enter EDMUND.

Edm. The enemy's in view ; draw up your powers.
 Here is the guess of their true strength and forces
 By diligent discovery ; but your haste
 Is now urged on you.

Alb. We will greet the time. [*Exit.*

Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my
 love ;

Each jealous of the other, as the stung
 Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take ?
 Both ? one ? or neither ? Neither can be enjoy'd,
 If both remain alive : to take the widow
 Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril ;
 And hardly shall I carry out my side,
 Her husband being alive. Now then we'll use
 His countenance for the battle ; which being done,
 Let her who would be rid of him devise
 His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
 Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia,
 The battle done, and they within our power,
 Shall never see his pardon ; for my state
 Stands on me to defend, not to debate. [*Exit.*

60

SCENE II. *A field between the two camps.*

*Alarum within. Enter, with drum and colours,
 LEAR, CORDELIA, and Soldiers, over the stage ;
 and exeunt.*

Enter EDGAR and GLOUCESTER.

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree

54. *greet the time, meet the
 occasion.*

61. *carry out my side, win
 my game.*

56. *jealous, suspicious.*

69. *Stands on me, it is in-
 cumbent on me.*

King Lear

ACT V

For your good host ; pray that the right may thrive :
If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you comfort.

Glou.

Grace go with you, sir !

[*Exit Edgar.*]

Alarum and retreat within. Re-enter EDGAR.

Edg. Away, old man ; give me thy hand ; away !

King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en :
Give me thy hand ; come on.

Glou. No farther, sir ; a man may rot even here.

Edg. What, in ill thoughts again ? Men must
endure

Their going hence, even as their coming hither : 10
Ripeness is all : come on.

Glou.

And that's true too. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The British camp near Dover.*

*Enter, in conquest, with drum and colours,
EDMUND : LEAR and CORDELIA, prisoners ;
Captain, Soldiers, etc.*

Edm. Some officers take them away : good
guard,

Until their greater pleasures first be known
That are to censure them.

Cor.

We are not the first

Who with best meaning have incurr'd the worst.

For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down ;

Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.

Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters ?

Lear. No, no, no, no ! Come, let's away to
prison :

11 *Ripeness, readiness.*

King Lear

We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage :
 When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down, 10
 And ask of thee forgiveness : so we'll live,
 And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
 At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
 Talk of court news ; and we'll talk with them too,
 Who loses and who wins ; who's in, who's out ;
 And take upon 's the mystery of things,
 As if we were God's spies : and we'll wear out,
 In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,
 That ebb and flow by the moon.

Edm. Take them away.

Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia, 20
 The gods themselves throw incense. Have I
 caught thee ?

He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven,
 And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes ,
 The good-years shall devour them, flesh and fell,
 Ere they shall make us weep : we'll see 'em starve
 first.

Come. [*Exeunt Lear and Cordelia, guarded.*]

Edm. Come hither, captain ; hark.
 Take thou this note [*giving a paper*] ; go follow
 them to prison :

One step I have advanced thee ; if thou dost
 As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
 To noble fortunes : know thou this, that men 30
 Are as the time is : to be tender-minded
 Does not become a sword : thy great employment
 Will not bear question ; either say thou 'lt do 't,
 Or thrive by other means.

Capt. I'll do 't, my lord.

Edm. About it ; and write happy when thou
 hast done.

18. *packs*, confederacies.

the French name for a disease.

24. *good-years*, a corruption of

33. *question*, discussion.

King Lear

ACT V

Mark, I say, instantly ; and carry it so
As I have set it down.

Capt. I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats ;
If't be man's work, I'll do it. [Exit.

Flourish. *Enter* ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN,
another Captain, and Soldiers.

Alb. Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant
strain,
And fortune led you well : you have the captives
That were the opposites of this day's strife :
We do require them of you, so to use them
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.

Edm. Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention and appointed guard ;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes
Which do command them. With him I sent the
queen ;

My reason all the same ; and they are ready
To-morrow, or at further space, to appear
Where you shall hold your session. At this time
We sweat and bleed : the friend hath lost his
friend ;

And the best quarrels, in the heat, are cursed
By those that feel their sharpness :
The question of Cordelia and her father
Requires a fitter place.

Alb. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.

Reg. That's as we list to grace him.

50. *impress'd*, pressed into our service.

King Lear

Methinks our pleasure might have been demanded,
 Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers ;
 Bore the commission of my place and person ;
 The which immediacy may well stand up,
 And call itself your brother.

Gon. Not so hot :
 In his own grace he doth exalt himself,
 More than in your addition.

Reg. In my rights,
 By me invested, he compeers the best.

Gon. That were the most, if he should husband
 you. 70

Reg. Jesters do oft prove prophets.

Gon. Holla, holla !
 That eye that told you so look'd but a-squint.

Reg. Lady, I am not well ; else I should answer
 From a full-flowing stomach. General,
 Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony ;
 Dispose of them, of me ; the walls are thine :
 Witness the world, that I create thee here
 My lord and master.

Gon. Mean you to enjoy him ?

Alb. The let-alone lies not in your good will.

Edm. Nor in thine, lord.

Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes. 80

Reg. [*To Edmund*] Let the drum strike, and
 prove my title thine.

Alb. Stay yet ; hear reason. Edmund, I arrest
 thee

On capital treason ; and in thine attainit

65. *immediacy*, immediate a-squint.'
 tenure of authority.

68. *in your addition*, by virtue 74. *stomach* ; the seat of
 of your title. anger.

72. *That eye*, etc. Alluding 79. *The let-alone*, the saying
 to the proverb : 'Love being nay ; prevention.

jealous makes a good eye look 83. *attaint*, impeachment.
 Qq 'arrest.'

King Lear

ACT V

This gilded serpent [*pointing to Gon.*]. For your claim, fair sister,
I bar it in the interest of my wife ;
'Tis she is sub-contracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your bans.
If you will marry, make your loves to me,
My lady is bespoke.

Gon. An interlude !

Alb. Thou art arm'd, Gloucester : let the trumpet sound : 90

If none appear to prove upon thy head
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge [*throwing down a glove*] ; I'll
prove it on thy heart,
Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
Than I have here proclaim'd thee.

Reg. Sick, O, sick !

Gon. [*Aside*] If not, I'll ne'er trust medicine.

Edm. There's my exchange [*throwing down a glove*] : what in the world he is

That names me traitor, villain-like he lies :
Call by thy trumpet : he that dares approach,
On him, on you, who not ? I will maintain 100
My truth and honour firmly.

Alb. A herald, ho !

Edm. A herald, ho, a herald !

Alb. Trust to thy single virtue ; for thy soldiers,
All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge.

Reg. My sickness grows upon me.

Alb. She is not well ; convey her to my tent.

[*Exit Regan, led.*]

Enter a Herald.

Come hither, herald,—Let the trumpet sound,—

89. *An interlude ! 'a farce !'*

King Lear

And read out this.

Capt. Sound, trumpet! [*A trumpet sounds.*

Her. [*Reads*] 'If any man of quality or degree 110
within the lists of the army will maintain upon
Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloucester, that he is
a manifold traitor, let him appear by the third
sound of the trumpet: he is bold in his defence.'

Edm. Sound! [*First Trumpet.*

Her. Again! [*Second trumpet.*

Her. Again! [*Third trumpet.*

[*Trumpet answers within.*

Enter EDGAR, at the third sound, armed, with
a trumpet before him.

Alb. Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o' the trumpet.

Her. What are you?
Your name, your quality? and why you answer 120
This present summons?

Edg. Know, my name is lost;
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit:
Yet am I noble as the adversary
I come to cope.

Alb. Which is that adversary?

Edg. What's he that speaks for Edmund Earl
of Gloucester?

Edm. Himself: what say'st thou to him?

Edg. Draw thy sword,
That, if my speech offend a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice: here is mine.
Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,
My oath, and my profession: I protest, 130
Maugre thy strength, youth, place, and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword and fire-new fortune,
Thy valour and thy heart, thou art a traitor;
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father;

King Lear

ACT V

Conspirant 'gainst this high-illustrious prince ;
 And, from the extremest upward of thy head
 To the descent and dust below thy foot,
 A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou 'No,'
 This sword, this arm, and my best spirits, are bent
 To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak, 140
 Thou liest.

Edm. In wisdom I should ask thy name ;
 But, since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
 And that thy tongue some say of breeding breathes,
 What safe and nicely I might well delay
 By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn :
 Back do I toss these treasons to thy head ;
 With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart ;
 Which for they yet glance by and scarcely bruise,
 This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
 Where they shall rest for ever. Trumpets, speak ! 150

[*Alarums. They fight. Edmund falls.*]

Alb. Save him, save him !

Gon. This is practice, Gloucester :
 By the law of arms thou wast not bound to answer
 An unknown opposite ; thou art not vanquish'd,
 But cozen'd and beguiled.

Alb. Shut your mouth, dame,
 Or with this paper shall I stop it. Hold, sir :
 Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil :
 No tearing, lady ; I perceive you know it.

[*Gives the letter to Edmund.*]

Gon. Say, if I do, the laws are mine, not thine :
 Who can arraign me for 't ?

Alb. Most monstrous ! oh !
 Know'st thou this paper ?

138. *toad-spotted*, as full of perfect technical justification.
 treason as the venomous toad is
 of spots. L.

143. *say*, proof.

147. *hell-hated*, hated like
 hell.

144. *safe and nicely*, with

151. *practice*, false play.

King Lear

Gon. Ask me not what I know. [*Exit.* 160

Alb. Go after her : she's desperate ; govern her.

Edm. What you have charged me with, that
have I done ;

And more, much more ; the time will bring it out :

'Tis past, and so am I. But what art thou

That hast this fortune on me ? If thou'rt noble,
I do forgive thee.

Edg. Let's exchange charity.

I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund ;

If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.

My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.

The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices

170

Make instruments to plague us :

The dark and vicious place where thee he got

Cost him his eyes.

Edm. Thou hast spoken right, 'tis true ;

The wheel is come full circle ; I am here.

Alb. Methought thy very gait did prophesy

A royal nobleness : I must embrace thee :

Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I

Did hate thee or thy father !

Edg. Worthy prince, I know't.

Alb. Where have you hid yourself ?

How have you known the miseries of your father ? 180

Edg. By nursing them, my lord. List a brief
tale ;

And when 'tis told, O, that my heart would burst !

The bloody proclamation to escape

That follow'd me so near,—O, our lives' sweetness !

That we the pain of death would hourly die

Rather than die at once !—taught me to shift

Into a madman's rags ; to assume a semblance

That very dogs disdain'd : and in this habit

Met I my father with his bleeding rings,

Their precious stones new lost ; became his guide, 190

Led him, begg'd for him, saved him from despair ;
Never—O fault !—reveal'd myself unto him,
Until some half-hour past, when I was arm'd :
Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,
I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
Told him my pilgrimage : but his flaw'd heart,—
Alack, too weak the conflict to support !—
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly.

Edm. This speech of yours hath moved me,
And shall perchance do good : but speak you on ; 200
You look as you had something more to say.

Alb. If there be more, more woeful, hold it in ;
For I am almost ready to dissolve,
Hearing of this.

Edg. This would have seem'd a period
To such as love not sorrow ; but another,
To amplify too much, would make much more,
And top extremity.
Whilst I was big in clamour came there in a
man,

Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society ; but then, finding 210
Who 'twas that so endured, with his strong arms
He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out
As he 'ld burst heaven ; threw him on my father ;
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him
That ever ear received : which in recounting
His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
Began to crack : twice then the trumpets sounded,
And there I left him tranced.

Alb. But who was this ?

Edg. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent ; who in
disguise
Follow'd his enemy king, and did him service 220
Improper for a slave.

King Lear

Enter a Gentleman, with a bloody knife.

Gent. Help, help, O, help !

Edg. What kind of help ?

Alb. Speak, man.

Edg. What means that bloody knife ?

Gent. 'Tis hot, it smokes ;

It came even from the heart of—O, she's dead !

Alb. Who dead ? speak, man.

Gent. Your lady, sir, your lady : and her sister
By her is poisoned ; she hath confess'd it.

Edm. I was contracted to them both : all three
Now marry in an instant.

Edg. Here comes Kent.

Alb. Produce their bodies, be they alive or dead : 230
This judgement of the heavens, that makes us
tremble,
Touches us not with pity. *[Exit Gentleman.*

Enter KENT.

O, is this he ?

The time will not allow the compliment
Which very manners urges.

Kent. I am come

To bid my king and master aye good night :
Is he not here ?

Alb. Great thing of us forgot !

Speak, Edmund, where's the king ? and where's
Cordelia ?

See'st thou this object, Kent ?

[The bodies of Goneril and Regan are brought in.]

Kent. Alack, why thus ?

Edm. Yet Edmund was beloved :

The one the other poison'd for my sake,
And after slew herself.

Alb. Even so. Cover their faces.

King Lear

ACT V

Edm. I pant for life : some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send,
Be brief in it, to the castle ; for my writ
Is on the life of Lear and on Cordelia :
Nay, send in time.

Alb. Run, run, O, run !

Edg. To who, my lord ? Who hath the office ?
send

Thy token of reprieve.

Edm. Well thought on : take my sword, 250
Give it the captain.

Alb. Haste thee, for thy life. [*Exit Edgar.*]

Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid herself.

Alb. The gods defend her ! Bear him hence
awhile. [*Edmund is borne off.*]

*Re-enter LEAR with CORDELIA dead in his
arms ; EDGAR, Captain, and others following.*

Lear. Howl, howl, howl, howl ! O, you are
men of stones :

Had I your tongues and eyes, I 'ld use them so
That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone
for ever !

I know when one is dead, and when one lives ; 260
She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking-glass ;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.

Kent. Is this the promised end ?

Edg. Or image of that horror ?

Alb. Fall, and cease !

Lear. This feather stirs ; she lives ! if it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows

243. *pant for life, gasp for life.*

262. *stone, crystal.*

That ever I have felt.

Kent. [*Kneeling*] O my good master !

Lear. Prithee, away.

Edg. 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.

Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors
all !

I might have saved her ; now she's gone for ever ! 270

Cordelia, Cordelia ! stay a little. Ha !

What is't thou say'st ? Her voice was ever soft,

Gentle and low, an excellent thing in woman.

I kill'd the slave that was a-hanging thee.

Capt. 'Tis true, my lords, he did.

Lear. Did I not, fellow ?

I have seen the day, with my good biting falchion

I would have made them skip : I am old now,

And these same crosses spoil me. Who are you ?

Mine eyes are not o' the best : I'll tell you straight.

Kent. If fortune brag of two she loved and hated, 280
One of them we behold.

Lear. This is a dull sight. Are you not Kent ?

Kent. The same,

Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius ?

Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that ;

He'll strike, and quickly too : he's dead and
rotten.

Kent. No, my good lord ; I am the very man,—

Lear. I'll see that straight.

Kent. That, from your first of difference and
decay,

Have follow'd your sad steps.

Lear. You are welcome hither.

Kent. Nor no man else : all's cheerless, dark,
and deadly. 290

Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves

And desperately are dead.

Lear. Ay, so I think.

King Lear

ACT V

Alb. He knows not what he says : and vain it is
That we present us to him.

Edg. Very bootless.

Enter a Captain.

Capt. Edmund is dead, my lord.

Alb. That's but a trifle here.

You lords and noble friends, know our intent.
What comfort to this great decay may come
Shall be applied : for us, we will resign,
During the life of this old majesty,
To him our absolute power : [*To Edgar and Kent*]
you, to your rights ;

300

With boot, and such addition as your honours
Have more than merited. All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings. O, see, see !

Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd ! No, no,
no life !

Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all ? 'Thou 'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never !

Pray you, undo this button : thank you, sir.

Do you see this ? Look on her, look, her lips, 310
Look there, look there ! [*Dies.*

Edg. He faints ! My lord, my lord !

Kent. Break, heart ; I prithee, break !

Edg. Look up, my lord.

Kent. Vex not his ghost : O, let him pass ! he
hates him,

That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

Edg. He is gone, indeed.

301. *boot*, enhancement.

313. *he hates him* ; 'he' is

305. *poor fool* ; i.e. Cordelia the subject of 'that would' ;
(a phrase of endearment). 'him' is Lear.

King Lear

Kent. The wonder is, he hath endured so long :
He but usurp'd his life.

Alb. Bear them from hence. Our present
business

Is general woe. [*To Kent and Edgar*] Friends of
my soul, you twain

Rule in this realm, and the gored state sustain. 320

Kent. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go ;
My master calls me, I must not say no.

Edg. The weight of this sad time we must obey ;
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most : we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

[*Exeunt, with a dead march.*]

323. The Ff give this speech to Edgar, Qq to 'Duke,' i.e.
Albany.

MACBETH

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DUNCAN, king of Scotland.

MALCOLM,
DONALBAIN, } his sons.

MACBETH,
BANQUO, } generals of the king's army.

MACDUFF,
LENNOX,
ROSS,
MENTEITH,
ANGUS,
CAITHNESS, } noblemen of Scotland.

FLEANCE, son to Banquo.

SIWARD, Earl of Northumberland, general of the
English forces.

Young SIWARD, his son.

SEYTON, an officer attending on Macbeth.

Boy, son to Macduff.

An English Doctor.

A Scotch Doctor.

A Soldier.

A Porter.

An Old Man.

LADY MACBETH.

LADY MACDUFF.

Gentlewoman attending on Lady Macbeth.

HECATE.

Three Witches.

Apparitions.

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants,
and Messengers.

SCENE : *Scotland ; England.*

Dramatis Personæ. *Hecate*, known by the three names Luna, Diana, and Hecate in heaven, earth, and hell respectively, was the goddess of magic and all forms of enchantment.

As a comment on the part played by the witches, Sir Thomas Browne's remark is

interesting : — ' For my part, I have ever believed, and do now know, that there are Witches : they that doubt of these, do not onely deny *them* but Spirits ; and are obliquely and upon consequence a sort not of Infidels, but of Atheists.'

INTRODUCTION

MACBETH was first published in the Folio of 1623. It is there already divided into scenes as well as acts. In other respects it is carelessly edited, and the text is among the worst printed in the entire series. In addition, the 'perfect' and 'absolute' copy of Shakespeare's work, which the editors of the Folio professed to print, is open to grave suspicion of having been severely revised, cut down, and interpolated after it left his hands. Much, finally, of what is unmistakably Shakespearean has rather the qualities of bold blocking out than of finished workmanship. Verses otherwise stamped with genius jostle rudely with every canon of metre, and the magnificent and inexhaustible poetry forces its way through daring anomalies of speech; while the supreme dramatic energy is focussed upon the two or three principal characters, with an exclusive intensity more characteristic of Æschylus than of the myriad-minded author of world-dramas like *Lear* and *Hamlet*. Under conditions so complex as these, the textual criticism of *Macbeth* is inevitably beset with problems which our knowledge does not suffice to solve.

The theory of a post-Shakespearean revision of *Macbeth* starts from a slender but definite basis of fact. Middleton's *The Witch* contains two songs referred to in the stage directions of *Macbeth* (viz.

Macbeth

'Come away, come away,' iii. 5., and 'Black spirits and white, iv. 1.), and afterwards introduced in Davenant's recast of his godfather's work. *The Witch* was most likely written some years after *Macbeth*; it was certainly old when *Macbeth* was printed. The coincidence can be accounted for on several hypotheses, as Mr. Bullen has shown; but the presumption decidedly is that the songs, simply referred to by their first lines in *Macbeth*, as familiar, were drawn from the play where they are quoted in full. This presumption gives a certain *locus standi* to theories of more extensive interpolation, which have been freely advanced with very various degrees of critical competency. The more revolutionary proposals of Messrs. Clark and Wright¹ have found support only from Mr. Fleay, who has since withdrawn it.² Besides a large part of the witch scenes, which might be plausibly assigned to the author of *The Witch*, and the porter scene, which had been rejected by Coleridge, they condemned the 'serjeant scene' (i. 2.), the king's-evil scene (iv. 3. 140-159), the relation of young Siward's death and crowning of Malcolm (v. 8. 35-75), and a variety of rhyming tags. The only serious allegation against the serjeant scene is that it relates the treason of Cawdor, which in the following scene is still unknown to Macbeth (i. 3. 72), and doubtful to Angus (i. 3. 111). But this 'discrepancy' is of the kind that arises when explanatory links drop out; it points rather to compression than to interpolation, and cannot for a moment avail against the profusion of Shakespearean touches scattered through both. That the porter scene, too, is in conception and execution altogether

¹ Edition of *Macbeth*, Introduction (Clar. Press Series). *Shakespeare*, p. 238, Mr. Fleay rejects only iii. 5. and iv. 1.

² In the *Life and Work of* 39-43.

Introduction

Shakespearean few recent critics doubt; for us, as for De Quincey,¹ the stage resolves the hesitation of the study; and the lofty morning-hymn which Schiller provided for the German people in place of these less edifying reflexions has disappeared even from the German stage.² The question thus reduces itself to the witch scenes. It must be allowed that there are here striking discrepancies of tone. In part, however, this means merely that in the witches, being a Shakespearean fusion of beings very unlike in legendary character, now the more poetic and now the grosser traits are dominant. But this does not hold of the strangely incongruous figure of Hecate. The leader and controller of the witches in Middleton's play had naturally no place in the legend of Macbeth. She is introduced for the first time in iii. 5. to ask the reason of her exclusion; but to the end she is a palpable intruder in the witches' cavern. With her entrance the northern scenery is suddenly brought into relation with classic myth; they are to meet her, no more on the blasted heath, but at the pit of Acheron; while the language, released from the weird horror or grossness of the other witch scenes, trips along in courtly rococo elegance, with graceful artifices of fancy suggestive of the *Midsommer-Night's Dream*. Her conceptions of enchantment belong to the world of Oberon; she proposes to beguile Macbeth with the distillations of a vaporous drop that hangs upon a corner of the

¹ *On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth*. Cf. Prof. Hales' full discussion of the whole question: *The Porter in Macbeth* (N. Shaksp. Soc. Transactions, 1874).

² Schiller's adaptation of *Macbeth* appeared at Weimar

in 1800. It is open to, and has received, severe criticism; but many of its defects spring from excessive regard for the immature taste of his public rather than from his own, and his version contributed enormously to domesticate Shakespeare in Germany.

Macbeth

moon; and the wild, withered hags about the cauldron remind her of elves and fairies in a ring. Of her enchantments nothing more is heard. The apparitions that fatally palter with Macbeth are raised by no lunar dewdrop, but by the less ethereal ingredients of the cauldron; and Hecate's naïve applause (iv. 1. 39-43) does not disguise her complete insignificance and superfluity. To these two passages of extremely doubtful authenticity may probably be added the farewell speech of the First Witch in the same scene (iv. 1. 125-132), whose good-natured desire to 'cheer up his sprites' is so oddly out of keeping with their character as demoniac contrivers of harm, and with the 'horrible sight' they have just disclosed to 'grieve his heart.' It may be noted, too, that all three passages (*i.e.* iii. 5., iv. 1. 39-43, and 125-132), are composed in iambic verse, the rest of the witch scenes being all trochaic.¹

Putting aside these passages (about forty lines) *Macbeth* can be assigned with some assurance to 1606. The unmistakable allusions to James (the 'two-fold balls and treble sceptres,' iv. 1. 119-122, and the touching for the king's evil, a treasured prerogative of his, iv. 3. 140-159) were of course written after his accession, and would lose point had his accession not been comparatively recent. The choice of subject implied, in effect, a double compliment to the king. Academic ingenuity had already brought the prophecies of the weird sisters into relation with the demonological descendant of Banquo; his entry into Oxford in 1605 having been celebrated in prophetic verses addressed to him by

¹ Cf. the excellent discussion of the supposed interpolations by Mr. E. K. Chambers in his edition of the play for the

Warwick Series (Appendices E, F, G), to which I owe some suggestions.

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three students in the character of Witches.¹ The Porter, again, in his quality of Clown, founds allusive jests on topics of 1606: the phenomenally abundant harvest (ii. 3. 5), and the Jesuit Garnet's defence of equivocation at his trial in the spring (iv. 3. 10). On the other hand, the play was already familiar in 1607, for Middleton's *The Puritan* contains an evident reference to Banquo's ghost: 'Instead of a jester we'll have a ghost in a white sheet sit at the upper end of the table.' It is also significant that Warner in 1606 inserted a *Historie of Macbeth* in a new edition of his popular repertory of English history, *Albion's England*. An unquestionable later limit is furnished by Dr. Simon Forman's account of the performance of *Macbeth* which he witnessed at the Globe in 1610. The curious naïveté of his report of the plot persuaded the older editors that the play must have been new. It was doubtless new to him.

No earlier handling of the story of Macbeth can be clearly made out. A ballad on 'Macdobeth' was entered in 1596 in the Stationers' Register, and Kempe, four years later, contemptuously referred to 'the miserable story of Mac-doel, or Mac-dobeth, or Macsometown' (*Nine Days' Wonder*, 1600). Whatever may lurk under these ambiguous allusions, it is clear that Shakespeare drew his materials substantially from Holinshed's *Chronicle of England and Scotland*, the long-familiar source of his English Histories and of *King Lear*. Even as told by Holinshed, the story is very great, and Shakespeare, in the very maturity of his art, found little to change or to add. In this, as in most other points of technique, *Macbeth* stands at the opposite pole to *King Lear*. No

¹ James's *Demonologie*, an elaborate refutation of free-thinking in matters of witchcraft, and especially of the sceptic Reginald Scot, appeared in 1599.

Macbeth

parallel from modern romance (like the Gloucester story from the *Arcadia*) crosses and complicates the ancient legendary theme: Macbeth and his wife fill the entire field without reflexion or counterpart. It is clear, nevertheless, that Shakespeare, though he may have thought the story as historical as that of the Richards or Henries, no longer approached it as history. Macbeth's career, and to some extent his character, are modelled on those of another Scottish assassin, Donwald, whose treacherous murder of King Duff Holinshed had described in vivid detail some twenty pages before, while of Duncan's murder he recorded merely the bare fact. Donwald, an officer of the king, enjoying his absolute trust, entertained him in the castle of Fores, of which he had charge. His wife incited him to use his opportunity, 'and shewed him the means whereby he might soonest accomplish it.'¹ Donwald himself 'abhorred the act greatly in heart,' but yields to his wife's urgency. Duff on retiring sends a present to his host; the grooms in the king's chamber, plied with meat and drink by his wife's care, sleep heavily, and fall victims, next morning, to Donwald's 'pious rage.' Fearful portents ensue: the sun is darkened; birds and beasts run counter to their common instincts. All these details Shakespeare has transferred to the story of Duncan, and they add greatly to its tragic force. Holinshed's Macbeth is only his victim's 'kinsman and his subject'; Shakespeare's violates a yet stronger instinct as 'his host,'

¹ Stone's *Holinshed*, p. 26 f. It is interesting to note that Milton included both 'Macbeth' and 'Duff and Donwald' in his list of subjects for a tragedy. It is clear that he would have kept the two stories wholly

distinct. In a valuable and suggestive paper Prof. Hales has indicated the lines on which the poet of *Paradise Lost* would probably have treated the Temptation and Fall of Macbeth (*Folia Litteraria*, 198 f.).

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'who should against his murderer shut the door, not bear the knife himself.' Holinshed's Macbeth plans and executes the murder with matter-of-fact promptitude, without a trace of hesitation or compunction; Shakespeare's Macbeth, like Donwald, has accesses of deep reluctance, in which his wife's resolute energy turns the scale. Holinshed's Lady Macbeth urges her husband 'to attempt the thing,' but has no part in its execution. Thus the elements of the relation between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, and of the hesitations and 'infirmity' which chiefly make him a tragic figure at all, are suggested by Holinshed's Donwald, not by his Macbeth. Much even of the political background of the murder belongs rather to the story of Duff. Holinshed's Macbeth acts with the complicity of 'his trusty friends,'—Banquo among the rest,—and 'upon confidence of their promised aid.' Shakespeare's Macbeth, like Donwald, has no political confederates, can count upon no sympathy if his part in the 'deep damnation' of the king's 'taking off' is discovered, and precipitates discovery by overacting his feigned grief.¹ Even Donwald has the aid of trusty servants: Shakespeare sends husband and wife unaided to their work amid the cry of owls and the prayers of startled sleepers. Finally, Shakespeare has deprived Macbeth of the shadow of political justification which his prototype in Holinshed might plead for his crime. Holinshed's Duncan is a gentle weakling, whom the rebel Macdonwald openly taunts as a 'faint-hearted milksop, more meet to govern a sect of idle monks in some cloister than to have the

¹ Donwald, as already stated, slays the chamberlains. And such, Holinshed proceeds, 'was his over-earnest diligence in the severe inquisition and trial of the offenders herein, that some

of the lords began to mislike the matter, and to smell for the shrewd tokens that he should not be altogether clear himself.' Cf. Lennox's ironical account of Macbeth's 'grief' (iii. 6.).

Macbeth

rule of such valiant and hardy men of war as the Scots were.' He is helplessly dependent upon his great captains, Macbeth and Banquo, and holds his kingdom only by their aid ; while Macbeth, having got rid of him, gives Scotland for ten years the blessing of a strong, just rule. Shakespeare's Duncan has all the graces of this type without its defects, bearing his faculties 'meekly,' but 'clear in his great office'; and Macbeth, valiant and loyal soldier as he appears at the outset, is hurried from his first act of 'foul play,' without an instant's pause, and with ever-increasing velocity, down the abyss of crime.

Thus Shakespeare prepares the ground for his tragedy of crime by clearing away all its normal pretexts and palliations. No film of finer motive softens its essential baseness. Alone among the heroes of Shakespeare's mature tragedy, Macbeth murders with the vulgar cupidity of the common cut-throat. Vulgar cupidity is not, taken by itself, a tragic motive ; and the stupendous effect of this drama has nothing in common with the pathos which springs from the interworking of a man's noble frailties with his fate, as in *Othello* or *Hamlet*. In a very marvellous way Shakespeare has contrived, without using other than mean motives as the impelling forces of the action, yet to connect it with permanent realities, to give it that 'semblance of eternity' without which great art cannot exist. The two criminal figures are lifted into tragic significance by a strange intensity of mental vision, which, while it does not preclude them from vulgar crime, makes them capable of a nowise vulgar Nemesis. Macbeth has much of the mental habitude of Hamlet. He has the feverish activity of intellect, which turns the common dust of daily incident and impulse into fiery trains of imagery and reflexion, and calls up his own past and purposed

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acts in spectral visions—a bloody dagger, a sheeted ghost—before his eyes. In Macbeth, as in Hamlet, the mental tumult tends to retard action; his ‘flighty purpose never is o’ertook unless the deed go with it.’ But the tragic effect lies no longer in the visions which retard his action, but in those which revenge it. Hamlet is wrought into accesses of passion when confronted with the practical energy which he lacks, and Macbeth, ruthless as he is, has a preternaturally acute sense of the power of pity. He foresees it ‘striding the blast’ and blowing ‘the horrid deed in every eye, that tears shall drown the wind.’ Day itself is ‘pitiful,’ and night shall scarf up her ‘tender eye’ before the murder of Banquo. The most appalling glimpses do not deter Macbeth from action any more than they prompt Hamlet to it; but they prey upon him when it is over. Here his wife’s sensibility is as keen as his; and if it is less fiercely tossed into images, it is crueller and more corroding. Both loathe their power as soon as they have it; and we hear the groan involuntarily wrung from each without the other’s knowledge (iii. 2.). Hers is the groan of the parched throat craving water and tasting dust:—

Nought’s had, all’s spent,
Where our desire is got without content:
’Tis safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

His expresses the delirium of mental torture, ‘the affliction of these terrible dreams that shake us nightly’:—

better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy.

Neither feels remorse, but the sense of unatoned

Macbeth

guilt haunts them in eerie visions of indelible blood-stains. With her the thought breaks forth only in the mental dissolution of her dreams, and in a quite simple form: 'All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.' With him its horror is never absent, and it utters itself in a burst of Titanic imagery:—

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

Of this inner Nemesis Holinshed has but the faintest suggestion. On the other hand, the supernatural interventions which precipitate Macbeth's outer doom had been for two centuries an inseparable part of his story.¹ Holinshed's version employs a formidable apparatus of enchantment. Macbeth receives three warnings, on three occasions, from three distinct classes of prophetically gifted beings. Three 'fairies or weird sisters' hail him at the outset. After the death of Banquo he is warned by 'certain wizards in whose words he put great confidence (for that the prophecy had happened so right, which the three fairies or weird sisters had declared unto him) how that he ought to take heed of Macduff.' He thereupon plans Macduff's death, but desists when 'a certain witch, whom he had in great trust,' assures him that he 'should never be slain by man born of woman, nor vanquished till the wood of Birnam came to the castle of Dunsinane.' Obvious dramatic

¹ The earliest known form of the witches' prophecy is given by Wyntoun, *Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland*, vi. 18. 17 f. (c. 1424):—

He thowcht, quhile he wes swa
sythand,
He sawe thre Wemen by gangend ;

And þai Wemen þan thowcht he
Thre Werd Systrys mast lyk to be.
þe fyr t he hard say gangand by,
Lo yhondyr þe Thayne of Crom-
bawchty.

þe toþir Woman sayd agayne,
Of Moraye yhondyre I se þe Thayne.
þe þryd þan sayd, 'I se þe kyng.'
Al þis he herd in hys dremyng.

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economy forbade this lavish distribution of the rôle of 'metaphysical aid'; and Shakespeare has blended the characteristics of all three in his weird-sister witches, who should be women 'but that their beards forbid me to interpret that they are so'; who tread the earth but seem not like its inhabitants; vanish like bubbles of the air, and speak a language which admits the extremes of sublimity and grossness,¹ of mystic suggestion and realistic detail, the wild elemental poetry of wind and storm, and the recondite lore of the foul and noisome potencies of matter. The hideous imaginings of popular and academic demonology, so busily promoted by the king, are drawn upon without reserve; but we see them through an enchanted atmosphere. It is clear that these beings, who so vitally moulded the fate of the traditional Macbeth, were not, for Shakespeare, like the dagger and the ghost, mere creations of his feverish brain, embodied symbols of his ambitious dreams. It is equally clear that for Shakespeare here, as elsewhere, the problem of fate and metaphysical influence lies in the mind of man. The witches' 'All hail!' on the blasted heath is as real for Banquo as for Macbeth, but they effect nothing with this honest and clear-headed Scot, who 'neither begs nor fears their favours nor their hate,' and is content to await the good fortune which, 'if the devil spoke true,' will come of itself without his stir. Banquo has been compared with Horatio, as the 'unimaginative, limited, but upright man of affairs,' to whom the witches and ghosts are significantly 'dumb' which 'speak' with such momentous effect to a Hamlet

¹ All attempts to suggest that Shakespeare distinguished, like Holinshed, between the 'weird sisters' and the 'witches' break down before the unquestionable fact that the 'witches' are repeatedly called the weird sisters (iii. 4. 133, v. 1. 136).

Macbeth

and a Macbeth. The contrast between the man whose dangerously acute sensibilities invoke his tragic fate, and the sagacious man of action who is his truest ally or his deadliest foe, recurs continually in the tragedies: in Lear and Kent, Coriolanus and Menenius; in Othello and Iago, Antony and Cæsar. In all of these the 'limitations' of the man of action are more salient than in Banquo, for whose ideal portraiture Shakespeare had, as we have seen, no warrant in Holinshed. Macbeth, the king by foul play, is no match in 'royalty of nature' for the ancestor of kings; his genius is rebuked under him, 'as it is said Mark Antony's was by Cæsar'; and the stimuli of evil suggestion which win Macbeth so lightly to his own harm, are foiled less by Banquo's want of imaginative sensibility than by his clear insight, wisdom, and valour. Macbeth's ready yielding is partly confusion of mind and partly want of nerve; Banquo's 'wisdom' would have fortified him in the thought which he grasps for one lucid moment: 'If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me, without my stir.' Banquo's 'dauntless temper' would have held him firm when Duncan's nomination of an heir appeared to cut off all ways but 'the shortest' to the crown. Banquo reads at the outset the riddle of the unearthly intervention which Macbeth himself only divines in the last paroxysm of desperation at the close. 'To win us to our harm, the instruments of darkness tell us truths,' strikes the note of equivocation which sounds throughout the play and reaches its tragic climax in Macbeth's shrieking curse upon 'these juggling fiends . . . that palter with us in a double sense,'—its grotesque anticlimax in the porter's grim jest at the equivocators who knock at hell-gate since they 'could not equivocate to heaven.' The witches' cry as they sweep away into the stormlit gloom, 'Fair

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is foul, and foul is fair,' is a fit opening formula for such a play. Even where no supernatural cunning is concerned, the style shows an unusual inclination to the Sophoclean irony of innocent phrases covering sinister depths of meaning ;—as in Ross's 'And, for an earnest of a greater honour, he bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor,' and Lady Macbeth's famous 'He that's coming must be provided for.' The entire atmosphere of *Macbeth*, as of no other tragedy, is oppressive with the sense of something subtly malignant as well as inexorably revengeful in the forces that rule the world ; of a tragic irony in the ultimate scheme of things. But if we are permitted to read Shakespeare's mind in the ethical atmosphere of his work, we must allow that the oppression it suggests is not despair. Macbeth is allured, not compelled, to his crime ; the 'supernatural soliciting' is not a 'divine thrusting on' ; he is not fate-ridden, nor irresponsible, nor the helpless sport of irresistible powers.¹ He is no symbol of the destiny of man ; and his desperate dismissal of life as 'a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing,' expresses only the inevitable intellectual anarchy of one who has listened to a tale full of pitfalls for the intelligence and subtle underlying meanings, and interpreted it with the naïve simplicity of a child.

¹ Cf. the strikingly-put, but Prof. Barrett Wendell, *W. I think overstated, remarks of Shakspeare*, p. 305.

MACBETH

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A desert place.*

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.

First Witch. When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

Sec. Witch. When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

Third Witch. That will be ere the set of sun.

First Witch. Where the place?

Sec. Witch. Upon the heath.

Third Witch. There to meet with Macbeth.

First Witch. I come, Graymalkin!

All. Paddock calls :—anon!

Fair is foul, and foul is fair :

Hover through the fog and filthy air. 10 *[Exeunt.]*

8, 9. *Graymalkin* . . . *Paddock*; lit. 'gray-cat,' 'toad'; the attendant familiars of the witches. *Paddock* still survives in provincial English from Cumberland to Sussex.

SCENE II. *A camp near Forres.*

Alarum within. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Sergeant.

Dun. What bloody man is that? He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.

Mal. This is the sergeant
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil
As thou didst leave it.

Ser. Doubtful it stood;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald—
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that 10
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him—from the western isles
Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied;
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,
Show'd like a rebel's whore: but all's too weak:
For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name—
Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valour's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave; 20

13. *kerns*, light-armed Erse soldiers. Cf. *Rich. II.* ii. 1. 156. 2 *Henry VI.* iv. 9. 26. The rebel Macdonwald is fighting with mercenaries.

13. *gallowglasses*, heavy-armed Erse soldiers. Cf. 19. *minion*, favourite (here with no suggestion of contempt).

Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

Dun. O valiant cousin ! worthy gentleman !

Ser. As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to
come

Discomfort swells. Mark, king of Scotland, mark :
No sooner justice had with valour arm'd
Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their heels, 30
But the Norweyan lord, surveying vantage,
With furbish'd arms and new supplies of men
Began a fresh assault.

Dun. Dismay'd not this

Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo ?

Ser. Yes ;

As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say sooth, I must report they were
As cannons overcharged with double cracks, so
they

Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe :
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
Or memorize another Golgotha, 40
I cannot tell—

But I am faint ; my gashes cry for help.

Dun. So well thy words become thee as thy
wounds ;

21. *Which ne'er shook hands*, etc. 'The slave' is probably the antecedent to *which*. There is an allusion to the formal handshaking which preceded a duel.

22. *nave*, navel, middle.

25, 26. 'As storms often come from the east, the region of the dawn, so victory may be the

starting-point for a fresh attack.'

37. *cracks*; the word describing the explosion is applied to the charge.

37. *so they*. If give these words at the beginning of v. 38. The two lines cannot be made into normal verse ; but the present arrangement is less harsh to the ear.

Macbeth

ACT I

They smack of honour both. Go get him surgeons.

[*Exit Sergeant, attended.*]

Who comes here ?

Enter Ross.

Mal. The worthy thane of Ross.

Len. What a haste looks through his eyes ! So
should he look

That seems to speak things strange.

Ross. God save the king !

Dun. Whence camest thou, worthy thane ?

Ross. From Fife, great king ;

Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky

And fan our people cold. Norway himself,

50

With terrible numbers,

Assisted by that most disloyal traitor

The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict ;

Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,

Confronted him with self-comparisons,

Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,

Curbing his lavish spirit : and, to conclude,

The victory fell on us.

Dun. Great happiness !

Ross. That now

Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition ;

Nor would we deign him burial of his men

60

Till he disbursed at Saint Colme's inch

Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

Dun. No more that thane of Cawdor shall
deceive

54. *Bellona*, the Roman goddess of war. With whip, torch, and flying hair, she was seen on battlefields, urging the combatants on.

55. *Confronted him with self-comparisons*, met him as his complete match. 'Self-com-

parisons' is literally 'comparisons (on equal terms) between their two selves.'

61. *Saint Colme's inch* ; the island of Inchcolm off the coast of Fife, once occupied by St. Columba, the first teacher of Christianity to the Picts.

Our bosom interest : go pronounce his present death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

Ross. I'll see it done.

Dun. What he hath lost noble Macbeth hath
won. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A heath near Forres.*

Thunder. *Enter the three Witches.*

First Witch. Where hast thou been, sister?

Sec. Witch. Killing swine.

Third Witch. Sister, where thou?

First Witch. A sailor's wife had chestnuts in
her lap,

And munch'd, and munch'd, and munch'd:—

'Give me,' quoth I:

'Aroint thee, witch!' the rump-fed ronyon cries.

Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger:

But in a sieve I'll thither sail,

And, like a rat without a tail,

I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

10

Sec. Witch. I'll give thee a wind.

First Witch. Thou'rt kind.

Third Witch. And I another.

First Witch. I myself have all the other,

And the very ports they blow,

All the quarters that they know

I' the shipman's card.

6. *Aroint thee*, 'begone!' Still in provincial use in the form 'rynt ye,' with the same sense.

6. *rump-fed*, probably equivalent to 'pampered' rather than to 'offal-fed.'

6. *ronyon*, a term of abuse.

9. A witch might assume any animal form, minus the tail.

10. *I'll do*; i.e. like a rat, gnaw a hole in the ship's bottom.

17. *shipman's card*, the circular card, marked with the points of the compass, for the steersman's use.

Macbeth

ACT I

I will drain him dry as hay :
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid ;
He shall live a man forbid :
Weary se'nnights nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine :
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.
Look what I have.

20

Sec. Witch. Show me, show me.

First Witch. Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wreck'd as homeward he did come.

[*Drum within.*

Third Witch. A drum, a drum !
Macbeth doth come.

30

All. The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about :
Thrice to thine and thrice to mine
And thrice again, to make up nine.
Peace ! the charm's wound up.

Enter MACBETH and BANQUO.

Macb. So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

Ban. How far is't call'd to Forres ? What are
these
So wither'd and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't ? Live you ? or are you aught

40

21. *forbid*, excommunicated.

33. *Posters*, messengers.

38. 'On one of those days when sunshine and storm struggle for the mastery,' Macbeth stands at the critical moment of his fortunes. His

surroundings harmonise with the moral strife ; and he is significantly made to echo unconsciously the parting cry of the witches in the first scene (v. 10) :—

Fair is foul, and foul is fair.

That man may question? You seem to understand me,

By each at once her choppy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips : you should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

Macb. Speak, if you can : what are you ?

First Witch. All hail, Macbeth ! hail to thee,
thane of Glamis !

Sec. Witch. All hail, Macbeth ! hail to thee,
thane of Cawdor !

Third Witch. All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be
king hereafter !

50

Ban. Good sir, why do you start ; and seem to
fear

Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of
truth,

Are ye fantastical, or that indeed

Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace and great prediction
Of noble having and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt withal : to me you speak not.

If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear

60

Your favours nor your hate.

First Witch. Hail !

Sec. Witch. Hail !

Third Witch. Hail !

First Witch. Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

Sec. Witch. Not so happy, yet much happier.

Third Witch. Thou shalt get kings, though thou
be none :

So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo !

First Witch. Banquo and Macbeth, all hail

53. *fantastical*, creations of fancy.

Macbeth

ACT I

Macb. Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more :

70

By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis ;
But how of Cawdor ? the thane of Cawdor lives,
A prosperous gentleman ; and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence
You owe this strange intelligence ? or why
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting ? Speak, I charge
you. [*Witches vanish.*]

Ban. The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them. Whither are they vanish'd ? 80

Macb. Into the air ; and what seem'd corporal
melted

As breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd !

Ban. Were such things here as we do speak
about ?

Or have we eaten on the insane root
That takes the reason prisoner ?

Macb. Your children shall be kings.

Ban. You shall be king.

Macb. And thane of Cawdor too : went it not so ?

Ban. To the selfsame tune and words. Who's
here ?

Enter Ross and ANGUS.

Ross. The king hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success ; and when he reads 90
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend
Which should be thine or his : silenced with that,
In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day,
He finds thee in the stout Norwegian ranks,

84. *insane*, producing insanity. Either hemlock or henbane is referred to.

Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,
 Strange images of death. As thick as hail
 Came post with post ; and every one did bear
 Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,
 And pour'd them down before him.

Ang.

We are sent 100

To give thee from our royal master thanks ;
 Only to herald thee into his sight,
 Not pay thee.

Ross. And, for an earnest of a greater honour,
 He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor :
 In which addition, hail, most worthy thane !
 For it is thine.

Ban.

What, can the devil speak true ?

Macb. The thane of Cawdor lives : why do you
 dress me

In borrow'd robes ?

Ang.

Who was the thane lives yet ;

But under heavy judgement bears that life 110
 Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was com-
 bined

With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
 With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
 He labour'd in his country's wreck, I know not ;
 But treasons capital, confess'd and proved,
 Have overthrown him.

Macb. [*Aside*] Glamis, and thane of Cawdor !
 The greatest is behind. [*To Ross and Angus*]
 Thanks for your pains.

[*To Ban.*] Do you not hope your children shall
 be kings,

When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me
 Promised no less to them ?

Ban.

That trusted home 120

120. *that trusted home*, such trust, pushed to its logical consequence.

Macbeth

ACT I

Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
 Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 'tis straneg :
 And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
 The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
 Win us with honest trifles, to betray 's
 In deepest consequence.
 Cousins, a word, I pray you.

Mach. [Aside] Two truths are told,
 As happy prologues to the swelling act
 Of the imperial theme.—I thank you, gentlemen.

[Aside] This supernatural soliciting 130
 Cannot be ill, cannot be good : if ill,
 Why hath it given me earnest of success,
 Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor :
 If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
 Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
 And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
 Against the use of nature? Present fears
 Are less than horrible imaginings :
 My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
 Shakes so my single state of man that function 140
 Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is
 But what is not.

Ban. Look, how our partner's rapt.

Mach. [Aside] If chance will have me king, why,
 chance may crown me,
 Without my stir.

Ban. New honours come upon him,
 Like our strange garments, cleave not to their
 mould

But with the aid of use.

Mach. [Aside] Come what come may,
 Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

Ban. Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

130. *soliciting*, temptation.

140. *my single state of man*, the kingdom of myself.

Mach. Give me your favour : my dull brain was wrought

With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains 150
Are register'd where every day I turn
The leaf to read them. Let us toward the king.
Think upon what hath chanced, and, at more time,
The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.

Ban.

Very gladly.

Mach. Till then, enough. Come, friends.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Forres. The palace.*

Flourish. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONAL-
BAIN, LENNOX, and Attendants.

Dun. Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not
Those in commission yet return'd?

Mal.

My liege,

They are not yet come back. But I have spoke
With one that saw him die : who did report
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,
Implored your highness' pardon, and set forth
A deep repentance : nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it ; he died
As one that had been studied in his death
To throw away the dearest thing he owed
As 'twere a careless trifle. 10

Dun.

There's no art

To find the mind's construction in the face :
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.

13. *He was a gentleman, etc.* these words are spoken gives
The entrance of Macbeth as them the effect of tragic irony.

Macbeth

ACT I

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, *and* ANGUS.

O worthiest cousin !

The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me : thou art so far before
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine ! only I have left to say, 20
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

Macb. The service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties ; and our duties
Are to your throne and state children and servants,
Which do but what they should by doing every
thing

Safe toward your love and honour.

Dun. Welcome hither :

I have begun to plant thee, and will labour
To make thee full of growing. Noble Banquo,
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known 30
No less to have done so, let me infold thee
And hold thee to my heart.

Ban. There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.

Dun. My plenteous joys,
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow. Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
And you whose places are the nearest, know
We will establish our estate upon
Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter
The Prince of Cumberland ; which honour must
Not unaccompanied invest him only, 40
But signs of nobleness, like 'stars, shall shine

34. *Wanton*, capricious from their very excess. L

On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,
And bind us further to you.

Macb. The rest is labour, which is not used for
you :

I'll be myself the harbinger and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach ;
So humbly take my leave.

Dun. My worthy Cawdor !

Macb. [*Aside*] The Prince of Cumberland ! that
is a step

On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires ; 50
Let not light see my black and deep desires :
The eye wink at the hand ; yet let that be,
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

[*Exit.*

Dun. True, worthy Banquo ; he is full so valiant,
And in his commendations I am fed ;
It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,
Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome :
It is a peerless kinsman. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Inverness. Macbeth's castle.*

Enter LADY MACBETH, *reading a letter.*

Lady M. 'They met me in the day of success :
and I have learned by the perfectest report, they
have more in them than mortal knowledge. When
I burned in desire to question them further, they
made themselves air, into which they vanished.
Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came
missives from the king, who all-hailed me "Thane

45. *harbinger*, strictly a royal official who preceded the king, to make arrangements for his reception. Cf. *purveyor*, i. 6. 22.

Macbeth

ACT I

of Cawdor ;" by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with "Hail, king that shalt be!" 10
This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell.'

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor ; and shalt be
What thou art promised : yet do I fear thy nature ;
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way : thou wouldst be great ;
Art not without ambition, but without 20
The illness should attend it : what thou wouldst highly,
That wouldst thou holily ; wouldst not play false,
And yet wouldst wrongly win : thou 'ldst have, great Glamis,
That which cries 'Thus thou must do, if thou have it ;
And that which rather thou dost fear to do Than wishest should be undone.' Hie thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear ;
And chastise with the valour of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round,
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem 30
To have thee crown'd withal.

Enter a Messenger.

What is your tidings ?

Mess. The king comes here to-night.

Lady M. Thou 'rt mad to say it :

Is not thy master with him ? who, were 't so,
Would have inform'd for preparation.

21. *illness*, evil.

30. *metaphysical*, supernatural.

Mess. So please you, it is true: our thane is coming:

One of my fellows had the speed of him,
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
Than would make up his message.

Lady M. Give him tending;
He brings great news. *[Exit Messenger.*

The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan 40
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances 50
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry 'Hold, hold!'

Enter MACBETH.

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.

Macb. My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night.

42. *mortal*, probably 'murderous.' L.

50. *sightless*, invisible.

53. At the outset Lady Macbeth is ready to commit the murder with her own hands.

Macbeth

ACT I

Lady M. And when goes hence? 60

Macb. To-morrow, as he purposes.

Lady M. O, never

Shall sun that morrow see!

Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent
flower,

But be the serpent under 't. He that's coming
Must be provided for: and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch;
Which shall to all our nights and days to come 70
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

Macb. We will speak further.

Lady M. Only look up clear;
To alter favour ever is to fear:
Leave all the rest to me. [Exeunt.

SCENE VI. *Before Macbeth's castle.*

*Hautboys and torches. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM,
DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF,
ROSS, ANGUS, and Attendants.*

Dun. This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.

Ban. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,
By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle:

64. *To beguile the time, to deceive the world. L.*

Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed
The air is delicate.

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Dun. See, see, our honour'd hostess ! 10
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you
How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

Lady M. All our service
In every point twice done and then done double
Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honours deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house : for those of old,
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,
We rest your hermits.

Dun. Where's the thane of Cawdor ? 20
We coursed him at the heels, and had a purpose
To be his purveyor : but he rides well ;
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest to-night.

Lady M. Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves and what is theirs, in
compt,
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
Still to return your own.

Dun. Give me your hand ;
Conduct me to mine host : we love him highly,
And shall continue our graces towards him. 30
By your leave, hostess. [*Exeunt.*]

13. 'ild, i.e. yield, repay.

men, as bound to pray for you.

20. *your hermits*, your bedes-

26. *compt*, account.

SCENE VII. *Macbeth's castle.*

Hautboys and torches. Enter a Sewer, and divers Servants with dishes and service, and pass over the stage. Then enter MACBETH.

Macb. If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well

It were done quickly : if the assassination
 Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
 With his surcease success ; that but this blow
 Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
 But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
 We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
 We still have judgement here ; that we but teach
 Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
 To plague the inventor : this even-handed justice 10
 Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
 To our own lips. He's here in double trust ;
 First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
 Strong both against the deed ; then, as his host,
 Who should against his murderer shut the door,
 Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
 Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
 So clear in his great office, that his virtues
 Will plead like angels trumpet-tongued against
 The deep damnation of his taking-off ; 20
 And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
 Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim horsed
 Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
 Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,

Sc. 7. a Sewer ; an official clude.
who arranged the dishes and
tasted the food.

7. jump, hazard.

3. trammel up, enmesh, in-

8. that, so that.

That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other.

Enter LADY MACBETH.

How now! what news?

Lady M. He has almost supp'd: why have you
left the chamber?

Macb. Hath he ask'd for me?

Lady M. Know you not he has? 30

Macb. We will proceed no further in this
business:

He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

Lady M. Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valour 40
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'
Like the poor cat i' the adage?

Macb. Prithee, peace:
I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.

Lady M. What beast was't, then
That made you break this enterprise to me?

45. *the poor cat i' the adage.* 'The cate would eat fyshe and
The adage, as given in *Hey-* would not wet her feete.'
wood's Proverbs, declared that

When you durst do it, then you were a man ;
 And, to be more than what you were, you would 50
 Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
 Did then adhere, and yet you would make both :
 They have made themselves, and that their fitness
 now

Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
 How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me :
 I would, while it was smiling in my face,
 Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
 And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
 Have done to this.

Macb. If we should fail ?

Lady M. We fail !

But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
 And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep—
 Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
 Soundly invite him—his two chamberlains
 Will I with wine and wassail so convince
 That memory, the warder of the brain,
 Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
 A limbeck only : when in swinish sleep
 Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
 What cannot you and I perform upon
 The unguarded Duncan ? what not put upon 70
 His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
 Of our great quell ?

Macb. Bring forth men-children only ;
 For thy undaunted mettle should compose
 Nothing but males. Will it not be received,
 When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
 Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,
 That they have done 't ?

50. *to be*, by being.

52. *adhere*, accord (with our design).

64. *convince*, overcome.

67. *limbeck*, alembic, still.

72. *quell*, murder.

Lady M. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar
Upon his death?

Macb. I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat. 8c
Away, and mock the time with fairest show :
False face must hide what the false heart doth
know. [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Inverness. Court of Macbeth's castle.*

*Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE bearing a torch
before him.*

Ban. How goes the night, boy?

Fle. The moon is down ; I have not heard the
clock.

Ban. And she goes down at twelve.

Fle. I take 't, 'tis later, sir.

Ban. Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry
in heaven ;

Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.

A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,

And yet I would not sleep. Merciful powers,

Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature

Gives way to in repose !

Enter MACBETH, and a Servant with a torch.

Give me my sword.

Who's there ? 10

4. *husbandry*, thrift.

the action would explain, and

5. *that* ; some other part of
his accoutrement, probably the
shield or targe. 'On the stage

all Shakespeare's plays were
written for the stage' (Cham-
bers).

Macbeth

ACT II

Macb. A friend.

Ban. What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's
a-bed :

He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess to your offices.
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess ; and shut up
In measureless content.

Macb. Being unprepared,
Our will became the servant to defect ;
Which else should free have wrought.

Ban. All's well.
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters : 20
To you they have show'd some truth.

Macb. I think not of them :
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that
business,
If you would grant the time.

Ban. At your kind'st leisure.

Macb. If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,
It shall make honour for you.

Ban. So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,
I shall be counsell'd.

Macb. Good repose the while !

Ban. Thanks, sir : the like to you ! 30

[*Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.*]

Macb. Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is
ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

[*Exit Servant.*]

23. *We.* Perhaps an involuntary anticipation of the is, at this stage, far inferior to his wife's.
kingly 'we.' Macbeth's acting

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me
clutch thee.

I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable 40
As this which now I draw.

Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going ;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest ; I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before. There's no such thing :
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse 50
The curtain'd sleep ; witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings, and wither'd murder,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives : 60
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.

[*A bell rings.*

I go, and it is done ; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan ; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell. [*Exit.*

36. *sensible*, perceptible.

46. *dudgeon*, haft.

46. *gouts*, thick drops.

Macbeth

ACT II

SCENE II. *The same.*

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. That which hath made them drunk
hath made me bold ;
What hath quench'd them hath given me fire.
Hark ! Peace !
It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,
Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it :
The doors are open ; and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores : I have drugg'd
their possets,
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

Macb. [*Within*] Who's there ? what, ho !

Lady M. Alack, I am afraid they have awaked, 10
And 'tis not done. The attempt and not the deed
Confounds us. Hark ! I laid their daggers ready ;
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done 't.

Enter MACBETH.

My husband !

Macb. I have done the deed. Didst thou not
hear a noise ?

Lady M. I heard the owl scream and the
crickets cry.
Did not you speak ?

3. *the fatal bellman.* The owl, as a bird of ill omen, is compared to the 'bellman' sent to condemned persons the night before they suffer.

3. Webster imitated this in the *Duchess of Malfi*, iv. 2 :—

Hark now everything is still
The screech-owl and the whistler
shrill
Call upon our dame aloud,
And bid her quickly don her shroud.

6. *possets*, hot milk curdled with ale, sugar, and eggs.

Macb. When?

Lady M. Now.

Macb. As I descended?

Lady M. Ay.

Macb. Hark!

Who lies i' the second chamber?

Lady M. Donalbain. 20

Macb. This is a sorry sight.

[*Looking on his hands.*]

Lady M. A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

Macb. There's one did laugh in's sleep, and
one cried 'Murder!'

That they did wake each other: I stood and heard
them:

But they did say their prayers, and address'd them
Again to sleep.

Lady M. There are two lodged together.

Macb. One cried 'God bless us!' and 'Amen'
the other;

As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.

Listening their fear, I could not say 'Amen,'

When they did say 'God bless us!'

Lady M. Consider it not so deeply. 30

Macb. But wherefore could not I pronounce
'Amen'?

I had most need of blessing, and 'Amen'

Stuck in my throat.

Lady M. These deeds must not be thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

Macb. Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no
more!

Macbeth does murder sleep,' the innocent sleep,

Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,

The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,

Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,

28. *As*, as if.

37. *ravell'd sleeve*, tangled skein.

Macbeth

ACT II

Chief nourisher in life's feast,—

Lady M. What do you mean? 40

Macb. Still it cried 'Sleep no more!' to all the house:

'Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more.'

Lady M. Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,

You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there: go carry them; and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

Macb. I'll go no more: 50

I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again I dare not.

Lady M. Infirm of purpose!

Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures: 'tis the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal;
For it must seem their guilt.

[*Exit. Knocking within.*]

Macb. Whence is that knocking?

How is't with me, when every noise appals me?
What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine
eyes.

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood 60
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

60. *Will all great Neptune's ocean*, etc. This is one of the most remarkable reminiscences of Seneca in Shakespeare:—

Quis eluet me Tanais? aut quae
barbaris
Maeotis undis pontico incumbens
mari?
non ipse toto magnus oceano pater
tantum expiarit sceleris.

Hippolytus, 723.

Re-enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. My hands are of your colour ; but I
shame

To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*] I
hear a knocking

At the south entry : retire we to our chamber :

A little water clears us of this deed :

How easy is it, then ! Your constancy

Hath left you unattended. [*Knocking within.*]

Hark ! more knocking.

Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us, 70

And show us to be watchers. Be not lost

So poorly in your thoughts.

Macb. To know my deed, 'twere best not know
myself. [*Knocking within.*]

Wake Duncan with thy knocking ! I would thou
couldst ! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The same.*

Knocking within. Enter a Porter.

Porter. Here's a knocking indeed ! If a man
were porter of hell-gate, he should have old turning

Sc. 3. Knocking within. Some sentences from De Quincey's suggestive note on this interruption and the following scene may be quoted :— ' When the deed is done, when the work of darkness is perfect, then the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds : the knocking at the gate is heard, and it makes known audibly that the reaction has

commenced : the human has made its reflux upon the fiendish ; the pulses of life are beginning to beat again ; and the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live, first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them. '

2. *old*, a colloquial epithet of emphasis ; ' fine, ' rare. '

the key. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub? Here's a farmer, that hang'd himself on the expectation of plenty: come in time; have napkins enow about you; here you'll sweat for't. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock! Who's there, in the other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against 10 either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O, come in, equivocator. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither, for stealing out of a French hose: come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of 20 all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire. [*Knocking within.*] Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter.

[*Opens the gate.*]

Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX.

Macd. Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?

Port. 'Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock: and drink, sir, is a great provoker of three things.

Macd. What three things does drink especially provoke?

Port. Marry, sir, nose-painting, sleep, and urine. Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes; it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance: therefore, much drink may be said to 30

17. *goose*, the tailor's iron, so called from its shape.

be an equivocator with lechery : it makes him,
and it mars him ; it sets him on, and it takes him
off ; it persuades him, and disheartens him ; makes
him stand to, and not stand to ; in conclusion,
equivocates him in a sleep, and, giving him the
lie, leaves him.

Macd. I believe drink gave thee the lie last
night.

Port. That it did, sir, i' the very throat on me :
but I requited him for his lie ; and, I think, being
too strong for him, though he took up my legs
sometime, yet I made a shift to cast him.

Macd. Is thy master stirring ?

Enter MACBETH.

Our knocking has awaked him ; here he comes.

Len. Good morrow, noble sir.

Macb. Good morrow, both.

Macd. Is the king stirring, worthy thane ?

Macb. Not yet.

Macd. He did command me to call timely on
him :

I had almost slipp'd the hour.

Macb. I'll bring you to him.

Macd. I know this is a joyful trouble to you ;
But yet 'tis one.

Macb. The labour we delight in physics pain.
This is the door.

Macd. I'll make so bold to call,
For 'tis my limited service.

[*Exit.*

Len. Goes the king hence to-day ?

Macb. He does : he did appoint so.

Len. The night has been unruly : where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down ; and, as they say,

57. *limited*, appointed.

Macbeth

ACT II

Lamentings heard i' the air ; strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustion and confused events
New hatch'd to the woeful time : the obscure bird
Clamour'd the livelong night : some say, the earth
Was feverous and did shake.

Macb. 'Twas a rough night.

Len. My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

Re-enter MACDUFF.

Macd. O horror, horror, horror ! Tongue nor
heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee !

Macb. } What's the matter ? 7c
Len. }

Macd. Confusion now hath made his master-
piece !

Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building !

Macb. What is't you say ? the life ?

Len. Mean you his majesty ?

Macd. Approach the chamber, and destroy your
sight

With a new Gorgon : do not bid me speak ;
See, and then speak yourselves.

[*Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.*

Awake, awake !

Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason !

73. *The Lord's anointed temple.* A blending of two scriptural phrases : ' the Lord's anointed ' (as in *Rich. III.* iv. 4. 150) and ' ye are the temple of the living God.'

77. There were three Gorgons, but the reference is to Medusa, whose head, fixed on Minerva's shield, turned all beholders to stone.

Banquo and Donalbain ! Malcolm ! awake ! 80
 Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
 And look on death itself ! up, up, and see
 The great doom's image ! Malcolm ! Banquo !
 As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
 To countenance this horror ! Ring the bell.
[*Bell rings.*]

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. What's the business,
 That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
 The sleepers of the house ? speak, speak !

Macd. O gentle lady,
 'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak :
 The repetition, in a woman's ear,
 Would murder as it fell. 90

Enter BANQUO.

O Banquo, Banquo,
 Our royal master's murder'd !

Lady M. Woe, alas !
 What, in our house ?

Ban. Too cruel any where.
 Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,
 And say it is not so.

Re-enter MACBETH and LENNOX, with ROSS.

Macb. Had I but died an hour before this
 chance,
 I had lived a blessed time ; for, from this instant,
 There's nothing serious in mortality :
 All is but toys : renown and grace is dead ;
 The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
 Is left this vault to brag of. 100

Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.

Don. What is amiss?

Macb. You are, and do not know't :
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopp'd ; the very source of it is stopp'd.

Macd. Your royal father's murder'd.

Mal. O, by whom?

Len. Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had
done't :

Their hands and faces were all badged with blood ;
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found
Upon their pillows :
They stared, and were distracted ; no man's life 110
Was to be trusted with them.

Macb. O, yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.

Macd. Wherefore did you so?

Macb. Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and
furious,

Loyal and neutral, in a moment ? No man :
The expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin laced with his golden blood ;
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature
For ruin's wasteful entrance : there, the murderers, 120
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd with gore : who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make's love known ?

Lady M. Help me hence, ho !

Macd. Look to the lady.

Mal. [*Aside to Don.*] Why do we hold our
tongues,

That most may claim this argument for ours ?

107. *badged*, marked.

122. *breech'd*, covered.

Don. [*Aside to Mal.*] What should be spoken
 here, where our fate,
 Hid in an auger-hole, may rush, and seize us?
 Let's away;
 Our tears are not yet brew'd.

130

Mal. [*Aside to Don.*] Nor our strong sorrow
 Upon the foot of motion.

Ban. Look to the lady :
 [*Lady Macbeth is carried out.*]

And when we have our naked frailties hid,
 That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
 And question this most bloody piece of work,
 To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us :
 In the great hand of God I stand ; and thence
 Against the undivulged pretence I fight
 Of treasonous malice.

Macd. And so do I.

All. So all.

Macb. Let's briefly put on manly readiness,
 And meet i' the hall together.

All. Well contented.

140

[*Exeunt all but Malcolm and Donalbain.*]

Mal. What will you do? Let's not consort
 with them :

To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
 Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

Don. To Ireland, I ; our separated fortune
 Shall keep us both the safer : where we are,
 There's daggers in men's smiles : the near in
 blood,

The nearer bloody.

Mal. This murderous shaft that's shot
 Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way
 Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse ;
 And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,

150

139. *manly readiness*, i.e. the equipment and mood of battle.

Macbeth

ACT II

But shift away : there's warrant in that theft
Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Outside Macbeth's castle.*

Enter Ross and an old Man.

Old M. Threescore and ten I can remember
well :

Within the volume of which time I have seen
Hours dreadful and things strange ; but this sore
night
Hath trifled former knowings.

Ross. Ah, good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's
act,
Threaten his bloody stage : by the clock, 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp :
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it ?

Old M. 'Tis unnatural, 10
Even like the deed that 's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

Ross. And Duncan's horses—a thing most
strange and certain—

4. *trifled*, reduced to insignificance.

6 f. Some of these details are borrowed from Holinshed's account of the murder of King *Duff*. He relates:—'For the space of vi moneths together after the haynous murder was committed, there appeared no Sunne by day, nor Moone by

night in any parte of the realme, but stil was the skie couered with continual clowdes.'

12. *towering*. In falconry, to 'rise spirally to a height' (Harting).

12. *place*, 'pitch,' *i.e.* the height reached by the falcon before swooping.

Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.

Old M. 'Tis said they eat each other.

Ross. They did so, to the amazement of mine
eyes
That look'd upon 't.

Enter MACDUFF.

Here comes the good Macduff. 20
How goes the world, sir, now?

Macd. Why, see you not?

Ross. Is't known who did this more than bloody
deed?

Macd. Those that Macbeth hath slain.

Ross. Alas, the day!
What good could they pretend?

Macd. They were suborn'd :
Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stol'n away and fled ; which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.

Ross. 'Gainst nature still !
Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up
Thine own life's means ! Then 'tis most like
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth. 30

Macd. He is already named, and gone to Scone
To be invested.

Ross. Where is Duncan's body?

Macd. Carried to Colmekill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.

Ross. Will you to Scone?

15. *minions*, choicest specimens, 'pearl,' or 'flower.'
Perth, at which the Scottish kings were crowned.

31. *Scone*. The town, near

Macbeth

ACT III

Macd. No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

Ross. Well, I will thither.

Macd. Well, may you see things well done
there : adieu !

Lest our old robes sit easier than our new !

Ross. Farewell, father.

Old M. God's benison go with you ; and with
those

That would make good of bad, and friends of
foes ! 40
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Forres. The palace.*

Enter BANQUO.

Ban. Thou hast it now : king, Cawdor, Glamis,
all,

As the weird women promised, and, I fear,
Thou play'dst most foully for't : yet it was said
It should not stand in thy posterity,
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them—
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine—
Why, by the verities on thee made good,
May they not be my oracles as well,
And set me up in hope ? But hush ! no more. 10

*Sennet sounded. Enter MACBETH, as king, LADY
MACBETH, as queen, LENNOX, ROSS, Lords,
Ladies, and Attendants.*

Macb. Here's our chief guest.

10. *Sennet*, a set of notes cing the approach or departure
played on the trumpet, announ- of a procession.

Lady M. If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And all-thing unbecoming.

Macb. To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.

Ban. Let your highness
Command upon me; to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
For ever knit.

Macb. Ride you this afternoon?

Ban. Ay, my good lord.

20

Macb. We should have else desired your good
advice,
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous,
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.
Is't far you ride?

Ban. As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.

Macb. Fail not our feast.

Ban. My lord, I will not.

Macb. We hear our bloody cousins are bestow'd 30
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention: but of that to-morrow,
When therewithal we shall have cause of state
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse: adieu,
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

Ban. Ay, my good lord: our time does call
upon's.

Macb. I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell.

[*Exit Banquo.* 40

Let every man be master of his time

Macbeth

ACT III

Till seven at night : to make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper-time alone : while then, God be with
you !

[*Exeunt all but Macbeth, and an Attendant.*]

Sirrah, a word with you : attend those men
Our pleasure ?

Atten. They are, my lord, without the palace
gate.

Macb. Bring them before us. [*Exit Attendant.*]

To be thus is nothing ;

But to be safely thus.—Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep ; and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be fear'd : 'tis much he
dares ;

And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear : and, under him,
My Genius is rebuked ; as, it is said,
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters
When first they put the name of king upon me,
And bade them speak to him : then prophet-like
They hail'd him father to a line of kings :
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind ;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd ;
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace
Only for them ; and mine eternal jewel

57. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, soul. Cf. *Rich. II.* i. 1. 180 :
ii. 3. 18-22. A jewel in a ten-times-barr'd-up
65. *filed*, defiled. chest
68. *eternal jewel*, immortal Is a bold spirit in a loyal breast

Given to the common enemy of man,
 To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings ! 70
 Rather than so, come, fate, into the list,
 And champion me to the utterance ! Who 's there ?

Re-enter Attendant, with two Murderers.

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.

[Exit Attendant.]

Was it not yesterday we spoke together ?

First Mur. It was, so please your highness.

Mach.

Well then, now

Have you consider'd of my speeches ? Know

That it was he in the times past which held you

So under fortune, which you thought had been

Our innocent self : this I made good to you

In our last conference, pass'd in probation with
 you, 80

How you were borne in hand, how cross'd, the
 instruments,

Who wrought with them, and all things else that
 might

To half a soul and to a notion crazed

Say 'Thus did Banquo.'

First Mur.

You made it known to us.

Mach. I did so, and went further, which is now
 Our point of second meeting. Do you find

Your patience so predominant in your nature

That you can let this go ? Are you so gossell'd

To pray for this good man and for his issue,

Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave 90

And beggar'd yours for ever ?

First Mur.

We are men, my liege.

Mach. Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men ;

As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,

72. *to the utterance, to the uttermost (O.Fr. 'à outrance').*

Macbeth

ACT III

Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves are cleft
 All by the name of dogs: the valued file
 Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
 The housekeeper, the hunter, every one
 According to the gift which bounteous nature
 Hath in him closed, whereby he does receive
 Particular addition, from the bill
 That writes them all alike: and so of men.
 Now if you have a station in the file,
 Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say't;
 And I will put that business in your bosoms,
 Whose execution takes your enemy off,
 Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
 Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
 Which in his death were perfect.

100

Sec. Mur. I am one, my liege,
 Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
 Have so incensed that I am reckless what
 I do to spite the world.

110

First Mur. And I another
 So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
 That I would set my life on any chance,
 To mend it, or be rid on't.

Macb. Both of you
 Know Banquo was your enemy.

Both Mur. True, my lord

Macb. So is he mine, and in such bloody
 distance,
 That every minute of his being thrusts
 Against my near'st of life: and though I could

94. *Shoughs*, a rough-coated dog. (of hounds) graded according to their relative value.

94. *water-rugs*, a rough kind of poodle. 100. *addition*, attribute.

94. *demi-wolves*, a cross between wolf and dog. 101. *writes them all alike*, includes all their varieties under the same generic name of 'dog.'

95. *the valued file*, catalogue

With barefaced power sweep him from my sight
 And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not, 120
 For certain friends that are both his and mine,
 Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
 Who I myself struck down ; and thence it is,
 That I to your assistance do make love,
 Masking the business from the common eye
 For sundry weighty reasons.

Sec. Mur. We shall, my lord,
 Perform what you command us.

First Mur. Though our lives—

Macb. Your spirits shine through you. Within
 this hour at most

I will advise you where to plant yourselves,
 Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time, 130
 The moment on 't ; for 't must be done to-night,
 And something from the palace ; always thought
 That I require a clearness : and with him—
 To leave no rubs nor botches in the work—
 Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
 Whose absence is no less material to me
 Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
 Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart :
 I'll come to you anon.

Both Mur. We are resolved, my lord.

Macb. I'll call upon you straight : abide within.

[*Excunt Murderers.* 140

It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight,
 If it find heaven, must find it out to-night. [*Exit.*

121. *For*, on account of.

determined by the closest
 scrutiny.

130. *perfect spy o' the time* ;
 probably the result of 'perfect
 spying,' the fit moment as

132. *always thought*, it being
 always remembered.

SCENE II. *The palace.*

Enter LADY MACBETH *and a Servant.*

Lady M. Is Banquo gone from court?

Serv. Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

Lady M. Say to the king, I would attend his
leisure

For a few words.

Serv. Madam, I will. *[Exit.*

Lady M. Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content :
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter MACBETH.

How now, my lord ! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,
Using those thoughts which should indeed have
died

With them they think on ? Things without all
remedy

Should be without regard : what's done is done.

Macb. We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it :
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.

But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds
suffer,

Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly : better be with the dead,

13. *scotch'd*, made narrow incisions, as with a 'scutcher' or riding-whip.

Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace, 20
 Than on the torture of the mind to lie
 In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave ;
 After life's fitful fever he sleeps well ;
 Treason has done his worst : nor steel, nor poison,
 Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
 Can touch him further.

Lady M. Come on ;
 Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks ;
 Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.

Mach. So shall I, love ; and so, I pray, be you :
 Let your remembrance apply to Banquo ; 30
 Present him eminence, both with eye and tongue :
 Unsafe the while that we
 Must lave our honours in these flattering streams,
 And make our faces vizards to our hearts,
 Disguising what they are.

Lady M. You must leave this.

Mach. O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear
 wife !

Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

Lady M. But in them nature's copy's not eterne.

Mach. There's comfort yet ; they are assailable ;
 Then be thou jocund : ere the bat hath flown 40
 His cloister'd flight, ere to black Hecate's summons
 The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums
 Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be
 done

A deed of dreadful note.

Lady M. What's to be done ?

Mach. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest
 chuck,

21. *on the torture of the mind to lie* ; an allusion to the rack. hold,' a form of land tenure which differed from freehold in

22. *ecstasy*, violent disturbance of mind. being terminable.

38. *copy* ; probably for 'copy- 42. *shard-borne* ; with allusion to the beetle's hard wing-case.

Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,
 Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;
 And with thy bloody and invisible hand
 Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
 Which keeps me pale! Light thickens; and the
 crow

50

Makes wing to the rooky wood:
 Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
 Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
 Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still:
 Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.
 So, prithee, go with me. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III. *A park near the palace.*

Enter three Murderers.

First Mur. But who did bid thee join with us?

Third Mur. Macbeth.

Sec. Mur. He needs not our mistrust, since he
 delivers

Our offices and what we have to do
 To the direction just.

First Mur. Then stand with us.
 The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day:
 Now spurs the lated traveller apace
 To gain the timely inn; and near approaches
 The subject of our watch.

Third Mur. Hark! I hear horses.

Ban. *[Within]* Give us a light there, ho!

Sec. Mur. Then 'tis he: the rest

46. *seeling* . . . *day*. An allusion to the practice, in falconry, of sewing up the falcon's eyelids.

49. *Cancel*, etc. A continuation of the image in line 37.

6. *lated*, belated.

That are within the note of expectation 10
 Already are i' the court.

First Mur. His horses go about.

Third Mur. Almost a mile : but he does usually,
 So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
 Make it their walk.

Sec. Mur. A light, a light !

Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE with a torch.

Third Mur. 'Tis he.

First Mur. Stand to 't.

Ban. It will be rain to-night.

First Mur. Let it come down.

[*They set upon Banquo.*

Ban. O, treachery ! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly,
 fly !

Thou mayst revenge. O slave !

[*Dies. Fleance escapes.*

Third Mur. Who did strike out the light ?

First Mur. Was 't not the way ?

Third Mur. There's but one down ; the son is
 fled.

Sec. Mur. We have lost 20

Best half of our affair.

First Mur. Well, let's away, and say how much
 is done. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The same. Hall in the palace.*

A banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, Lords, and Attendants.

Macb. You know your own degrees ; sit down :
 at first

And last a hearty welcome.

Macbeth

ACT III

Lords. Thanks to your majesty.

Macb. Ourselves will mingle with society,
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time
We will require her welcome.

Lady M. Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our
friends ;
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

Enter First Murderer to the door.

Macb. See, they encounter thee with their hearts'
thanks.

Both sides are even : here I'll sit i' the midst : 10
Be large in mirth ; anon we'll drink a measure
The table round. [*Approaching the door.*] There's
blood upon thy face.

Mur. 'Tis Banquo's then.

Macb. 'Tis better thee without than he within.
Is he dispatch'd ?

Mur. My lord, his throat is cut ; that I did for
him.

Macb. Thou art the best o' the cut-throats : yet
he's good
That did the like for Fleance : if thou didst it
Thou art the nonpareil.

Mur. Most royal sir,
Fleance is 'scaped. 20

Macb. Then comes my fit again : I had else
been perfect,
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing air :
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in

5. *keeps her state*, remains daringly ungrammatical way of
seated in her chair of state. saying that the blood is better
on the murderer's face than in

14. *'Tis better*, etc. ; a Banquo's veins.

To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?

Mur. Ay, my good lord : safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head ;
The least a death to nature.

Macb. Thanks for that :
There the grown serpent lies ; the worm that 's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed, 30
No teeth for the present. Get thee gone : to-morrow
We'll hear ourselves again. [*Exit Murderer.*]

Lady M. My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer : the feast is sold
That is not often vouch'd, while 'tis a-making,
'Tis given with welcome : to feed were best at home ;
From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony ;
Meeting were bare without it.

Macb. Sweet remembrancer !
Now, good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both !

Len. May't please your highness sit.
[*The Ghost of Banquo enters, and sits in
Macbeth's place.*]

Macb. Here had we now our country's honour
roof'd, 40
Were the graced person of our Banquo present ;
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance !

Ross. His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your
highness

To grace us with your royal company.

Macb. The table's full.

Len. Here is a place reserved, sir.

Macb. Where?

Len. Here, my good lord. What is't that moves
your highness?

Macb. Which of you have done this?

Macbeth

ACT III

Lords. What, my good lord?

Macb. Thou canst not say I did it : never shake
Thy gory locks at me. 50

Ross. Gentlemen, rise : his highness is not well.

Lady M. Sit, worthy friends : my lord is often
thus,

And hath been from his youth : pray you, keep
seat ;

The fit is momentary ; upon a thought
He will again be well : if much you note him,
You shall offend him and extend his passion :
Feed, and regard him not. Are you a man?

Macb. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on
that

Which might appal the devil.

Lady M. O proper stuff! 60

This is the very painting of your fear :
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,
Impostors to true fear, would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

Macb. Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo!
how say you?

Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too. 70
If charnel-houses and our graves must send
Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites. [*Ghost vanishes.*]

Lady M. What, quite unmann'd in folly?

Macb. If I stand here, I saw him.

Lady M. Fie, for shame!

Macb. Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the
olden time,

60. *proper*, excellent (with irony).

Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal ;
 Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd
 Too terrible for the ear : the time has been,
 That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
 And there an end ; but now they rise again, 80
 With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
 And push us from our stools : this is more strange
 Than such a murder is.

Lady M. My worthy lord,
 Your noble friends do lack you.

Macb. I do forget.
 Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends ;
 I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
 To those that know me. Come, love and health
 to all ;

Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine ; fill full.
 I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,
 And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss ; 90
 Would he were here ! to all, and him, we thirst,
 And all to all.

Lords. Our duties, and the pledge.

Re-enter Ghost.

Macb. Avaunt ! and quit my sight ! let the earth
 hide thee !

Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold ;
 Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
 Which thou dost glare with !

Lady M. Think of this, good peers,
 But as a thing of custom : 'tis no other ;
 Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

Macb. What man dare, I dare :
 Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear, 100

76. *purged the gentle weal,* 85. *muse, wonder.*
 purged the state of violence and 95. *speculation, power of*
 hence made it 'gentle.' sight.

Macbeth

ACT III

The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger ;
 Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
 Shall never tremble : or be alive again,
 And dare me to the desert with thy sword ;
 If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
 The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow !
 Unreal mockery, hence ! *[Ghost vanishes.*

Why, so : being gone,

I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.

Lady M. You have displaced the mirth, broke
 the good meeting,
 With most admired disorder.

Macb. Can such things be, 110
 And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
 Without our special wonder ? You make me
 strange

Even to the disposition that I owe,
 When now I think you can behold such sights,
 And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
 When mine is blanch'd with fear.

Ross. What sights, my lord ?

Lady M. I pray you, speak not ; he grows worse
 and worse ;

Question enrages him. At once, good night :
 Stand not upon the order of your going,
 But go at once.

Len. Good night ; and better health 120
 Attend his majesty !

Lady M. A kind good night to all !

[Exeunt all but Macbeth and Lady M.]

101. *Hyrcan tiger.* Hyrcania, (invest myself in it as an outward
 on the borders of Parthia and habit).
 Media, was a noted haunt of **106.** *baby,* doll.
 wild beasts. Tigers are said **110.** *admired,* wonderful,
 still to abound there. marvellous.

105. *If trembling I inhabit ;* **113.** *the disposition that I owe,*
 probably ' If I display trembling ' my fixed bent of character.

Macb. It will have blood ; they say, blood will
have blood :

Stones have been known to move and trees to
speak ;

Augurs and understood relations have
By magot-pies and choughs and rooks brought forth
The secret'st man of blood. What is the night ?

Lady M. Almost at odds with morning, which
is which.

Macb. How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his
person

At our great bidding ?

Lady M. Did you send to him, sir ?

Macb. I hear it by the way ; but I will send : 130

There's not a one of them but in his house

I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,

And betimes I will, to the weird sisters :

More shall they speak ; for now I am bent to know,

By the worst means, the worst. For mine own
good,

All causes shall give way : I am in blood

Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,

Returning were as tedious as go o'er :

Strange things I have in head that will to hand ;

Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd. 140

Lady M. You lack the season of all natures,
sleep.

Macb. Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and
self-abuse

Is the initiate fear that wants hard use :

We are yet but young in deed. [*Exeunt.*

125. *magot-pies*, magpies.

142. *self-abuse*, self-delusion.

SCENE V. *A Heath.*

*Thunder. Enter the three Witches,
meeting HECATE.*

First Witch. Why, how now, Hecate ! you look
angrily.

Hec. Have I not reason, beldams as you are,
Saucy and overbold ? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death ;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never call'd to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art ?
And, which is worse, all you have done 10
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now : get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron
Meet me i' the morning : thither he
Will come to know his destiny :
Your vessels and your spells provide,
Your charms and every thing beside.
I am for the air ; this night I'll spend 20
Unto a dismal and a fatal end :
Great business must be wrought ere noon :
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound ;

Sc. 5. The scene is probably
an interpolation.

15. *Acheron* was the stream
over which the souls of the dead
were conveyed to the under-
world.

24. *There hangs*, etc. Classi-
cal magic ascribed to the moon
certain exudations (*virus lunare*)
which, under the spells of the
enchanter, were shed upon
earthly objects.

I'll catch it ere it come to ground :
 And that distill'd by magic sleights
 Shall raise such artificial sprites
 As by the strength of their illusion
 Shall draw him on to his confusion :
 He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear 30
 His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace and fear :
 And you all know, security
 Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

[*Music and a song within* : 'Come away,
 come away,' etc.]

Hark ! I am call'd ; my little spirit, see,
 Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me. [*Exit.*

First Witch. Come, let's make haste ; she'll
 soon be back again. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Forres. The palace.*

Enter LENNOX and another Lord.

Len. My former speeches have but hit your
 thoughts,
 Which can interpret further : only, I say,
 Things have been strangely borne. The gracious
 Duncan
 Was pitied of Macbeth : marry, he was dead :
 And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late ;
 Whom, you may say, if't please you, Fleance kill'd,
 For Fleance fled : men must not walk too late.
 Who cannot want the thought how monstrous
 It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
 To kill their gracious father ? damned fact ! 10

32. *security*, carelessness. suggestion.

8. *Who cannot want*, who can fail to have.

Sc. 6. *Forres* is Capell's

Macbeth

ACT III

How it did grieve Macbeth ! did he not straight
In pious rage the two delinquents tear,
That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep ?
Was not that nobly done ? Ay, and wisely too ;
For 'twould have anger'd any heart alive
To hear the men deny't. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well : and I do think
That had he Duncan's sons under his key—
As, an't please heaven, he shall not—they should
find

What 'twere to kill a father ; so should Fleance. 20
But, peace ! for from broad words, and 'cause he
fail'd

His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear
Macduff lives in disgrace : sir, can you tell
Where he bestows himself ?

Lord. The son of Duncan,
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,
Lives in the English court, and is received
Of the most pious Edward with such grace
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect : thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid 30
To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward :
That, by the help of these—with Him above
To ratify the work—we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,
Do faithful homage and receive free honours :
All which we pine for now : and this report
Hath so exasperate the king that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

Len. Sent he to Macduff ?

Lord. He did : and with an absolute ' Sir, not I,' 40
The cloudy messenger turns me his back,

21. *from, on account of.*

41. *cloudy, sullen.*

And hums, as who should say 'You 'll rue the time
That clogs me with this answer.'

Len. And that well might
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England and unfold
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under a hand accursed !

Lord. I 'll send my prayers with him.
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A cavern. In the middle, a boiling
cauldron.*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

First Witch. Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

Sec. Witch. Thrice and once the hedge-pig
whined.

Third Witch. Harpier cries 'Tis time, 'tis time.

First Witch. Round about the cauldron go ;
In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

All. Double, double toil and trouble ;

10

Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

Sec. Witch. Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake ;

3. *Harpier*, perhaps a reminiscence of ' harpy.'

Eye of newt and toe of frog,
 Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
 Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
 Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,
 For a charm of powerful trouble,
 Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

All. Double, double toil and trouble ; 20
 Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Third Witch. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
 Witches' mummy, maw and gulf
 Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,
 Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
 Liver of blaspheming Jew,
 Gall of goat, and slips of yew
 Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse,
 Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,
 Finger of birth-strangled babe 30
 Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
 Make the gruel thick and slab :
 Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
 For the ingredients of our cauldron.

All. Double, double toil and trouble ;
 Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Sec. Witch. Cool it with a baboon's blood,
 Then the charm is firm and good.

Enter HECATE to the other three Witches.

Hec. O, well done ! I commend your pains ;
 And every one shall share i' the gains : 40
 And now about the cauldron sing,

23. *gulf*, a synonym for
 'maw.'

24. *ravin'd*, ravenous.

25. *the dark*, as the season of
 misdeeds.

28. *in the moon's eclipse*, a
 season proverbially ill-omened ;
 cf. *Lear* i. 2. 112, *Sonnets* lx.
 and cvii.

33. *chaudron*, entrails.

Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.

[*Music and a song: 'Black Spirits,' etc.*

[*Hecate retires.*

Sec. Witch. By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.

Open, locks,
Whoever knocks !

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. How now, you secret, black, and mid-
night hags !
What is't you do ?

All. A deed without a name.

Macb. I conjure you, by that which you profess, 50
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me :
Though you untie the winds and let them fight
Against the churches ; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up ;
Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown
down ;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads ;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations ; though the
treasure
Of nature's germens tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken ; answer me 60
To what I ask you.

First Witch. Speak.

Sec. Witch. Demand.

Third Witch. We'll answer.

First Witch. Say, if thou 'dst rather hear it from
our mouths,
Or from our masters ?

Macb. Call 'em ; let me see 'em.

55. *lodged, beaten down.* Cf. *Rich. II.* iii. 3. 162.

Macbeth

ACT IV

First Witch. Pour in sow's blood, that hath
eaten

Her nine farrow ; grease that's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.

All. Come, high or low ;
Thyself and office deftly show !

Thunder. *First Apparition : an armed Head.*

Macb. Tell me, thou unknown power,—

First Witch. He knows thy thought :
Hear his speech, but say thou nought. 70

First App. Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth !
beware Macduff ;
Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.

[*Descends.*

Macb. Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution,
thanks ;
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright : but one word
more,—

First Witch. He will not be commanded : here's
another,
More potent than the first.

Thunder. *Second Apparition : a bloody Child.*

Sec. App. Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth !

Macb. Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.

Sec. App. Be bloody, bold, and resolute ; laugh
to scorn

The power of man, for none of woman born 80
Shall harm Macbeth. [*Descends.*

68. *The Apparitions.* The 'armed head' represents symbolically Macbeth's own, struck off by Macduff (see *stage direction* v. 8. 53) ; the 'bloody child' represents Macduff (see v. 8. 15) ; the 'child crowned with a tree in his hand' represents Malcolm, who gives the order to the soldiers to cut down the boughs of Birnam Wood (v. 4. 4).

Macbeth

Macb. Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?

But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.

*Thunder. Third Apparition: a Child crowned,
with a tree in his hand.*

What is this

That rises like the issue of a king,
And wears upon his baby-brow the round
And top of sovereignty?

All. Listen, but speak not to't.

Third App. Be lion-mettled, proud; and take
no care

90

Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him.

[*Descends.*

Macb. That will never be:

Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements!
good!

Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art
Can tell so much: shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

100

All. Seek to know no more.

Macb. I will be satisfied: deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know

Macbeth

ACT IV

Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise is this?
[*Hautboys.*]

First Witch. Show!

Sec. Witch. Show!

Third Witch. Show!

All. Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart! 110

A show of Eight Kings, the last with a glass in his hand; Banquo's Ghost following.

Macb. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo;
down!

Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls. And thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.
A third is like the former. Filthy hags!
Why do you show me this? A fourth! Start, eyes!
What, will the line stretch out to the crack of
doom?

Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more:
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass
Which shows me many more; and some I see 120
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry:
Horrible sight! Now, I see, 'tis true;
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his. [*Apparitions vanish.*]
What, is this so?

- III. *A show of Eight Kings.* Banquo is reputed to have been an ancestor of the Stuarts. Walter Stuart married the grand-daughter of Robert Bruce, and their son was Robert II. His descendants, who sat upon the throne, were Robert III. and the six kings called James. Mary, daughter of James V., is omitted in the vision, as the witches' prophecy
- related only to kings.
121. *balls*, the globe, part of the king's insignia. In 1542 Henry VIII. took the title of King of Ireland. When James VI. of Scotland came to the English throne the three sceptres were united. Thus he alone of the eight could carry 'two-fold balls and treble sceptres.'
123. *blood-bolter'd*, clotted with blood.

First Witch. Ay, sir, all this is so : but why
 Stands Macbeth thus amazedly ?
 Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
 And show the best of our delights :
 I'll charm the air to give a sound,
 While you perform your antic round ;
 That this great king may kindly say,
 Our duties did his welcome pay.

130

[*Music. The Witches dance, and then
 vanish, with Hecate.*]

Mach. Where are they ? Gone ? Let this pernicious hour
 Stand aye accursed in the calendar !
 Come in, without there !

Enter LENNOX.

Len. What's your grace's will ?

Mach. Saw you the weird sisters ?

Len. No, my lord.

Mach. Came they not by you ?

Len. No, indeed, my lord.

Mach. Infected be the air whereon they ride ;
 And damn'd all those that trust them ! I did hear
 The galloping of horse : who was't came by ?

140

Len. 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you
 word

Macduff is fled to England.

Mach. Fled to England !

Len. Ay, my good lord.

Mach. Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits :
 The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
 Unless the deed go with it : from this moment
 The very firstlings of my heart shall be
 The firstlings of my hand. And even now,

145. *flighty, fleeting.*

Macbeth

ACT IV

To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought
and done :

The castle of Macduff I will surprise ; 150

Seize upon Fife ; give to the edge o' the sword

His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls

That trace him in his line. No boasting like a
fool ;

This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.

But no more sights !—Where are these gentlemen ?

Come, bring me where they are. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Fife. Macduff's castle.*

Enter LADY MACDUFF, *her* Son, *and* ROSS.

L. Macd. What had he done, to make him fly
the land ?

Ross. You must have patience, madam.

L. Macd. He had none :

His flight was madness : when our actions do not,

Our fears do make us traitors.

Ross. You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

L. Macd. Wisdom ! to leave his wife, to leave
his babes,

His mansion and his titles in a place

From whence himself does fly ? He loves us not ;

He wants the natural touch : for the poor wren,

The most diminutive of birds, will fight, 10

Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.

All is the fear and nothing is the love :

As little is the wisdom, where the flight

So runs against all reason.

Ross. My dearest coz,

7. *titles, possessions.* 9. *the natural touch, inborn affection.*

I pray you, school yourself : but for your husband,
 He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
 The fits o' the season. I dare not speak much further ;
 But cruel are the times, when we are traitors
 And do not know ourselves, when we hold rumour
 From what we fear, yet know not what we fear, 20
 But float upon a wild and violent sea
 Each way and move. I take my leave of you :
 Shall not be long but I'll be here again :
 Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
 To what they were before. My pretty cousin,
 Blessing upon you !

L. Macd. Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

Ross. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
 It would be my disgrace and your discomfort :

I take my leave at once. [Exit.

L. Macd. Sirrah, your father's dead : 30
 And what will you do now ? How will you live ?

Son. As birds do, mother.

L. Macd. What, with worms and flies ?

Son. With what I get, I mean ; and so do they.

L. Macd. Poor bird ! thou'ldst never fear the
 net nor lime,
 The pitfall nor the gin.

Son. Why should I, mother ? Poor birds they
 are not set for.

My father is not dead, for all your saying.

L. Macd. Yes, he is dead : how wilt thou do for
 a father ?

17. *fits o' the season*, critical emergencies of the time.

19. *know ourselves*, i.e. to be such.

19. *when we hold rumour from what we fear*, our vague foreboding gives a sinister

colour to every rumour, but never becomes a clear anticipation of a definite ill.

22. *and move*. If right, these obscure words probably make explicit the idea of movement to and fro implied in 'floating' on 'a wild and violent sea.'

Macbeth

ACT IV

Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband

L. Macd. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

40

Son. Then you 'll buy 'em to sell again.

L. Macd. Thou speak'st with all thy wit ; and yet, i' faith,

With wit enough for thee.

Son. Was my father a traitor, mother ?

L. Macd. Ay, that he was.

Son. What is a traitor ?

L. Macd. Why, one that swears and lies.

Son. And be all traitors that do so ?

L. Macd. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hanged.

50

Son. And must they all be hanged that swear and lie ?

L. Macd. Every one.

Son. Who must hang them ?

L. Macd. Why, the honest men.

Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang up them.

L. Macd. Now, God help thee, poor monkey ! But how wilt thou do for a father ?

60

Son. If he were dead, you 'ld weep for him : if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

L. Macd. Poor prattler, how thou talk'st !

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Bless you, fair dame ! I am not to you known,

Though in your state of honour I am perfect.

I doubt some danger does approach you nearly :

If you will take a homely man's advice,

66. *Though in your state, etc., I am aware of your rank.*

Be not found here ; hence, with your little ones.
 To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage ; 70
 To do worse to you were fell cruelty,
 Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve
 you !

I dare abide no longer. *[Exit.*

L. Macd. Whither should I fly ?
 I have done no harm. But I remember now
 I am in this earthly world ; where to do harm
 Is often laudable, to do good sometime
 Accounted dangerous folly : why then, alas,
 Do I put up that womanly defence,
 To say I have done no harm ?

Enter Murderers.

What are these faces ?

First Mur. Where is your husband ? 80

L. Macd. I hope, in no place so unsanctified
 Where such as thou mayst find him.

First Mur. He's a traitor.

Son. Thou liest, thou shag-hair'd villain !

First Mur. What, you egg !

[Stabbing him.

Young fry of treachery !

Son. He has kill'd me, mother :

Run away, I pray you ! *[Dies.*

[Exit Lady Macduff, crying ' Murder ! '

Exeunt Murderers, following her.

SCENE III. *England. Before the King's palace.*

Enter MALCOLM and MACDUFF.

Mal. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and
 there

Weep our sad bosoms empty.

Macbeth

ACT IV

Macd. Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men
Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom : each new morn
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out
Like syllable of dolour.

Mal. What I believe I'll wail,
What know believe, and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will. 10
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest : you have loved him
well :
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young ; but
something
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom
To offer up a weak poor innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.

Macd. I am not treacherous.

Mal. But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your
pardon ; 20
That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose :
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell :
Though all things foul would wear the brows of
grace,
Yet grace must still look so.

Macd. I have lost my hopes.

Mal. Perchance even there where I did find
my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,

10. *to friend*, opportune. withholds it from distrust,
24. *my hopes* ; i.e. hopes of aroused by Macduff's abandon-
welcome from Malcolm, who ment of wife and children.

Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,
 Without leave-taking? I pray you,
 Let not my jealousies be your dishonours,
 But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just, 30
 Whatever I shall think.

Macd. Bleed, bleed, poor country!
 Great tyranny! lay thou thy basis sure,
 For goodness dare not check thee: wear thou thy
 wrongs;

The title is affeer'd! Fare thee well, lord:
 I would not be the villain that thou think'st
 For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
 And the rich East to boot.

Mal. Be not offended:
 I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
 I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
 It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash 40
 Is added to her wounds: I think withal
 There would be hands uplifted in my right;
 And here from gracious England have I offer
 Of goodly thousands: but, for all this,
 When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
 Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
 Shall have more vices than it had before,
 More suffer and more sundry ways than ever,
 By him that shall succeed.

Macd. What should he be?

Mal. It is myself I mean: in whom I know 50
 All the particulars of vice so grafted
 That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth
 Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
 Esteem him as a lamb, being compared
 With my confineless harms.

Macd. Not in the legions
 Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd

Macbeth

ACT IV

In evils to top Macbeth.

Mal. I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name : but there's no bottom, none, 60
In my voluptuousness : your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons and your maids, could not fill up
The cistern of my lust, and my desire
All continent impediments would o'erbear
That did oppose my will : better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign.

Macd. Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny ; it hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy throne
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours : you may 70
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink.
We have willing dames enough ; there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclined.

Mal. With this there grows
In my most ill-composed affection such
A stanchless avarice that, were I king,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,
Desire his jewels and this other's house : 80
And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more ; that I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.

Macd. This avarice
Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
Than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings : yet do not fear ;

58. *Luxurious*, lecherous.

72. *time*, world.

Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will,
 Of your mere own : all these are portable,
 With other graces weigh'd. 90

Mal. But I have none : the king-becoming
 graces,

As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
 Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
 Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
 I have no relish of them, but abound
 In the division of each several crime,
 Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
 Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
 Uproar the universal peace, confound
 All unity on earth.

Macd. O Scotland, Scotland ! 100

Mal. If such a one be fit to govern, speak :
 I am as I have spoken.

Macd. Fit to govern !

No, not to live. O nation miserable,
 With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,
 When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
 Since that the truest issue of thy throne
 By his own interdiction stands accursed,
 And does blaspheme his breed ? Thy royal father
 Was a most sainted king : the queen that bore thee,
 Oftener upon her knees than on her feet, 110
 Died every day she lived. Fare thee well !
 These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
 Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,
 Thy hope ends here !

Mal. Macduff, this noble passion,
 Child of integrity, hath from my soul
 Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts
 To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth
 By many of these trains hath sought to win me

88. *foisons*, plenty.

Macbeth

ACT IV

Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me
 From over-credulous haste : but God above 120
 Deal between thee and me ! for even now
 I put myself to thy direction, and
 Unspeak mine own detraction, here abjure
 The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
 For strangers to my nature. I am yet
 Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,
 Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,
 At no time broke my faith, would not betray
 The devil to his fellow, and delight
 No less in truth than life : my first false speaking 130
 Was this upon myself : what I am truly,
 Is thine and my poor country's to command :
 Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,
 Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,
 Already at a point, was setting forth.
 Now we'll together ; and the chance of goodness
 Be like our warranted quarrel ! Why are you silent ?
Macd. Such welcome and unwelcome things at
 once
 'Tis hard to reconcile.

Enter a Doctor.

Mal. Well ; more anon.—Comes the king forth,
 I pray you ? 140

Doct. Ay, sir ; there are a crew of wretched souls
 That stay his cure : their malady convinces
 The great assay of art ; but at his touch—
 Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand—
 They presently amend.

Mal. I thank you, doctor. [*Exit Doctor.*]

Macd. What's the disease he means ?

Mal. 'Tis call'd the evil :

135. *at a point*, completely equipped, ready for all risks.

142. *convinces*, defeats.

A most miraculous work in this good king ;
 Which often, since my here-remain in England,
 I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
 Himself best knows : but strangely-visited people, 150
 All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
 The mere despair of surgery, he cures,
 Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
 Put on with holy prayers : and 'tis spoken,
 To the succeeding royalty he leaves
 The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,
 He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
 And sundry blessings hang about his throne,
 That speak him full of grace.

Enter Ross.

Macd. See, who comes here ?

Mal. My countryman ; but yet I know him not. 160

Macd. My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

Mal. I know him now. Good God, betimes
 remove

The means that makes us strangers !

Ross. Sir, amen.

Macd. Stands Scotland where it did ?

Ross. Alas, poor country !

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
 Be call'd our mother, but our grave ; where nothing,
 But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile ;
 Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the
 air

Are made, not mark'd ; where violent sorrow seems
 A modern ecstasy : the dead man's knell 170
 Is there scarce ask'd for who ; and good men's lives

153. *Hanging a golden stamp,* 'The King's Purse knows that
 etc. Each person touched re- the King's Evil grows more
 ceived a gold coin. Sir Thomas common.'
 Browne wrote sixty years later : 170. *modern, commonplace.*

Macbeth

ACT IV

Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.

Macd. O, relation

Too nice, and yet too true !

Mal. What 's the newest grief ?

Ross. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker :
Each minute teems a new one.

Macd. How does my wife ?

Ross. Why, well.

Macd. And all my children ?

Ross. Well too.

Macd. The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace ?

Ross. No ; they were well at peace when I did
leave 'em.

Macd. Be not a niggard of your speech : how
goes 't ?

180

Ross. When I came hither to transport the
tidings,

Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour
Of many worthy fellows that were out ;
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot :
Now is the time of help ; your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.

Mal. Be 't their comfort

We are coming thither : gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men ;
An older and a better soldier none
That Christendom gives out.

190

Ross. Would I could answer
This comfort with the like ! But I have words
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch them.

Macd. What concern they ?

174. *nice*, particular.

195. *latch*, catch.

The general cause? or is it a fee-grief
Due to some single breast?

Ross. No mind that's honest
But in it shares some woe; though the main part
Pertains to you alone.

Macd. If it be mine,
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it. 200

Ross. Let not your ears despise my tongue for
ever,
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound
That ever yet they heard.

Macd. Hum! I guess at it.

Ross. Your castle is surprised; your wife and
babes

Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,
To add the death of you.

Mal. Merciful heaven!

What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break. 210

Macd. My children too?

Ross. Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.

Macd. And I must be from thence!
My wife kill'd too?

Ross. I have said.

Mal. Be comforted:
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.

Macd. He has no children. All my pretty ones?
Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?

196. *a fee-grief*, a grief held
'in fee' by a single owner. whose talk of comfort at such a
moment is thus rebutted and

216. *He has no children.* explained. Macbeth lies wholly
'He' is probably Malcolm, beyond the pale of such reproach.

What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?

Mal. Dispute it like a man.

Macd. I shall do so ; 220

But I must also feel it as a man :
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look
on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them
now!

Mal. Be this the whetstone of your sword: let
grief

Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

Macd. O, I could play the woman with mine
eyes 230

And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle
heavens,

Cut short all intermission; front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too!

Mal. This tune goes manly.

Come, go we to the king; our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave: Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you
may:

The night is long that never finds the day. 240
[*Exeunt.*]

220. *Dispute it*, strive with it.

239. *Put on*, incite

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Dunsinane. Ante-room in the castle.**Enter a Doctor of Physic and a
Waiting-Gentlewoman.*

Doct. I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

Gent. Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her night-gown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

Doct. A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching! In this slumbry agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

Gent. That, sir, which I will not report after her.

Doct. You may to me: and 'tis most meet you should.

Gent. Neither to you nor any one; having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter Lady MACBETH, with a taper.

Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise; and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close,

Macbeth

ACT V

Doct. How came she by that light?

Gent. Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

Doct. You see, her eyes are open.

Gent. Ay, but their sense is shut.

Doct. What is it she does now? Look, how 30
she rubs her hands.

Gent. It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

Lady M. Yet here's a spot.

Doct. Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

Lady M. Out, damned spot! out, I say!—
One: two: why, then 'tis time to do't.—Hell is 40
murky!—Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard?
What need we fear who knows it, when none can
call our power to account?—Yet who would have
thought the old man to have had so much blood
in him.

Doct. Do you mark that?

Lady M. The thane of Fife had a wife: where
is she now?—What, will these hands ne'er be
clean?—No more o' that, my lord, no more o'
that: you mar all with this starting. 50

Doct. Go to, go to; you have known what
you should not.

Gent. She has spoke what she should not,
I am sure of that: heaven knows what she has
known.

Lady M. Here's the smell of the blood still:
all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this
little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

Doct. What a sigh is there! The heart is
sorely charged.

60

Gent. I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

Doct. Well, well, well,—

Gent. Pray God it be, sir.

Doct. This disease is beyond my practice: yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

Lady M. Wash your hands; put on your nightgown; look not so pale.—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on's grave. 70

Doct. Even so?

Lady M. To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand: what's done cannot be undone.—To bed, to bed, to bed! [Exit.

Doct. Will she go now to bed?

Gent. Directly.

Doct. Foul whisperings are abroad: unnatural deeds

Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds 80
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets:
More needs she the divine than the physician.
God, God forgive us all! Look after her;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,
And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night:
My mind she has mated, and amazed my sight.
I think, but dare not speak.

Gent. Good night, good doctor.

[Exeunt.

86. *mated*, confounded, astonished.

SCENE II. *The country near Dunsinane.*

Drum and colours. Enter MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, and Soldiers.

Ment. The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward and the good Macduff:
Revenge burn in them; for their dear causes
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm
Excite the mortified man.

Ang. Near Birnam wood
Shall we well meet them; that way are they
coming.

Caith. Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

Len. For certain, sir, he is not: I have a file
Of all the gentry: there is Siward's son,
And many unrough youths that even now
Protest their first of manhood.

10

Ment. What does the tyrant?

Caith. Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:
Some say he's mad; others that lesser hate him
Do call it valiant fury: but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause
Within the belt of rule.

Ang. Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love: now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe

20

3. *dear causes*, personal the devout ascetic, dead to all
causes, touching them closely. natural sympathies.

5. *the mortified man*, (even) 18. *minutely*, momentarily.

Upon a dwarfish thief.

Ment. Who then shall blame
His pester'd senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there?

Caith. Well, march we on,
To give obedience where 'tis truly owed :
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,
And with him pour we in our country's purge
Each drop of us.

Len. Or so much as it needs,
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds. 30
Make we our march towards Birnam.

[*Exeunt, marching.*]

SCENE III. *Dunsinane. A room in the castle.*

Enter MACBETH, Doctor, and Attendants.

Macb. Bring me no more reports; let them
fly all :

Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with fear. What 's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus :
'Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee.' Then fly, false
thanes,

And mingle with the English epicures :
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear. 10

Enter a Servant.

The devil damn thee black, thou cream faced loon!

3. *taint*, become tainted

Macbeth

ACT V

Where got'st thou that goose look?

Serv. There is ten thousand—

Macb. Geese, villain?

Serv. Soldiers, sir.

Macb. Go prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch?
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?

Serv. The English force, so please you.

Macb. Take thy face hence. [*Exit Servant.*

Seyton!—I am sick at heart,
When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This push 20
Will cheer me ever, or disseat me now.
I have lived long enough: my way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.
Seyton!

Enter SEYTON.

Sey. What is your gracious pleasure?

Macb. What news more? 30

Sey. All is confirm'd, my lord, which was
reported.

Macb. I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be
hack'd.

Give me my armour.

Sey. 'Tis not needed yet.

Macb. I'll put it on.

Send out moe horses; skirr the country round;
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine
armour.

15. *patch*, fool.

35. *skirr*, scour.

How does your patient, doctor?

Doct. Not so sick, my lord,
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,
That keep her from her rest.

Macb. Cure her of that.
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased, 40
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

Doct. Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.

Macb. Throw physic to the dogs ; I'll none of it.
Come, put mine armour on ; give me my staff.
Seyton, send out.—Doctor, the thanes fly from
me.—

Come, sir, dispatch.—If thou couldst, doctor, cast 50
The water of my land, find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again.—Pull 't off, I say.—
What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,
Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou
of them?

Doct. Ay, my good lord ; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.

Macb. Bring it after me.
I will not be afraid of death and bane,
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane. 60

Doct. [*Aside*] Were I from Dunsinane away
and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here. [*Exeunt.*

43. *oblivious*, inducing forget- state Macbeth puts on and takes
fulness. off his armour.

55. *senna*. So F₄ for F₁
'cyme.'

50, 54, 58. In his disturbed

SCENE IV. *Country near Birnam wood.*

Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, old SIWARD and his Son, MACDUFF, MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, ROSS, and Soldiers, marching.

Mal. Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That chambers will be safe.

Ment. We doubt it nothing.

Siw. What wood is this before us?

Ment. The wood of Birnam.

Mal. Let every soldier hew him down a bough
And bear 't before him : thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host and make discovery
Err in report of us.

Soldiers. It shall be done.

Siw. We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
Our setting down before 't.

Mal. 'Tis his main hope : 10
For where there is advantage to be given,
Both more and less have given him the revolt,
And none serve with him but constrained things
Whose hearts are absent too.

Macd. Let our just censures
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.

Siw. The time approaches
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have and what we owe.
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate : 20
Towards which advance the war.

[*Exeunt, marching.*]

Macbeth

SCENE V. *Dunsinane. Within the castle.*

Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, and Soldiers, with drum and colours.

Macb. Hang out our banners on the outward walls ;

The cry is still 'They come : ' our castle's strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn : here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up :
Were they not forced with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home.

[A cry of women within.

What is that noise ?

Sey. It is the cry of women, my good lord.

[Exit.

Macb. I have almost forgot the taste of fears :
The time has been, my senses would have cool'd 10
To hear a night-shriek ; and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir
As life were in 't : I have supp'd full with horrors ;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.

Re-enter SEYTON.

Wherefore was that cry ?

Sey. The queen, my lord, is dead.

Macb. She should have died hereafter ;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day 20
To the last syllable of recorded time,

5. *forced*, reinforced.

6. *dareful*, defiantly.

11. *fell*, skin ; here 'scalp.'

And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
 The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle !
 Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
 And then is heard no more : it is a tale
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
 Signifying nothing.

Enter a Messenger.

Thou comest to use thy tongue ; thy story quickly.

Mess. Gracious my lord,
 I should report that which I say I saw,
 But know not how to do it.

30

Macb. Well, say, sir.

Mess. As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
 I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
 The wood began to move.

Macb. Liar and slave !

Mess. Let me endure your wrath, if't be not so :
 Within this three mile may you see it coming ;
 I say, a moving grove.

Macb. If thou speak'st false,
 Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
 Till famine cling thee : if thy speech be sooth,
 I care not if thou dost for me as much.

40

I pull in resolution, and begin
 To doubt the equivocation of the fiend
 That lies like truth : ' Fear not, till Birnam wood
 Do come to Dunsinane : ' and now a wood
 Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out !
 If this which he avouches does appear,
 There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.
 I gin to be aweary of the sun,
 And wish the estate o' the world were now undone.

50

23. *dusty death*, death brings
 back 'dust to dust.'

40. *cling*, shrivel.

42. *pull in*, rein in, curb.

Ring the alarum-bell ! Blow, wind ! come, wrack !
At least we'll die with harness on our back.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Dunsinane. Before the castle.*

*Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, old SIWARD,
MACDUFF, and their Army, with boughs.*

Mal. Now near enough : your leavy screens
throw down,
And show like those you are. You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,
Lead our first battle : worthy Macduff and we
Shall take upon 's what else remains to do,
According to our order.

Siw. Fare you well.

Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

Macd. Make all our trumpets speak ; give them
all breath,
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death. 10
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII. *Another part of the field.*

Alarums. Enter MACBETH.

Macb. They have tied me to a stake ; I cannot
fly,
But, bear-like, I must fight the course. What's he
That was not born of woman ? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

Enter young SIWARD.

Yo. Siw. What is thy name ?

Macbeth

ACT V

Macb. Thou 'lt be afraid to hear it.

Yo. Siw. No; though thou call'st thyself a
hotter name
Than any is in hell.

Macb. My name 's Macbeth.

Yo. Siw. The devil himself could not pronounce
a title
More hateful to mine ear.

Macb. No, nor more fearful.

Yo. Siw. Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my
sword

10

I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

[*They fight and young Siward is slain.*]

Macb. Thou wast born of woman.
But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandish'd by man that 's of a woman born. [*Exit.*]

Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. That way the noise is. Tyrant, show
thy face!

If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms
Are hired to bear their staves: either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword with an unbatter'd edge
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst be; 20
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited. Let me find him, fortune!
And more I beg not. [*Exit. Alarums.*]

Enter MALCOLM and old SIWARD.

Siw. This way, my lord; the castle 's gently
render'd:
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight;

22. *bruited*, announced.

24. *gently render'd*, surrendered without resistance.

The noble thanes do bravely in the war ;
 The day almost itself professes yours,
 And little is to do.

Mal. We have met with foes
 That strike beside us.

Siw. Enter, sir, the castle.
 [*Exeunt. Alarums.*]

SCENE VIII. *Another part of the field.*

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. Why should I play the Roman fool, and
 die
 On mine own sword ? whiles I see lives, the gashes
 Do better upon them.

Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. Turn, hell-hound, turn !

Macb. Of all men else I have avoided thee :
 But get thee back ; my soul is too much charged
 With blood of thine already.

Macd. I have no words :
 My voice is in my sword : thou bloodier villain
 Than terms can give thee out ! [*They fight.*]

Macb. Thou lovest labour :
 As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air
 With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed : 10
 Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests ;
 I bear a charmed life, which must not yield
 To one of woman born.

Macd. Despair thy charm ;
 And let the angel whom thou still hast served
 Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
 Untimely ripp'd.

Macb. Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,

Macbeth

ACT V

For it hath cow'd my better part of man !
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That palter with us in a double sense ;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.

20

Macd. Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time :
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
'Here may you see the tyrant.'

Mach. I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last. Before my body
I throw my warlike shield : lay on, Macduff,
And damn'd be him that first cries 'Hold, enough !'

30

[*Exeunt, fighting. Alarums.*]

*Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and
colours, MALCOLM, old SIWARD, ROSS, the
other Thanes, and Soldiers.*

Mal. I would the friends we miss were safe
arrived.

Siw. Some must go off : and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

Mal. Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

Ross. Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's
debt :

He only lived but till he was a man ;
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.

40

20. *palter*, equivocate.

Siw. Then he is dead?

Ross. Ay, and brought off the field : your cause
of sorrow

Must not be measured by his worth, for then
It hath no end.

Siw. Had he his hurts before?

Ross. Ay, on the front.

Siw. Why then, God's soldier be he !
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death :
And so, his knell is knoll'd.

Mal. He's worth more sorrow, 50
And that I'll spend for him.

Siw. He's worth no more :
They say he parted well, and paid his score :
And so, God be with him ! Here comes newer
comfort.

Re-enter MACDUFF, with MACBETH'S head.

Macd. Hail, king ! for so thou art : behold,
where stands
The usurper's cursed head : the time is free :
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,
That speak my salutation in their minds ;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine :
Hail, King of Scotland !

All. Hail, King of Scotland ! [*Flourish.*]

Mal. We shall not spend a large expense of time 60
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and
kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland
In such an honour named. What's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,
As calling home our exiled friends abroad

56. *thy kingdom's pearl*, the flower of thy nobles.

Macbeth

ACT V

That fled the snares of watchful tyranny ;
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life ; this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,
We will perform in measure, time and place :
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

70

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MARK ANTONY,	}	triumvirs.
OCTAVIUS CÆSAR,		
M. ÆMILIUS LEPIDUS,		
SEXTUS POMPEIUS.		
DOMITIUS ENOBARBUS,	}	friends to Antony.
VENTIDIUS,		
EROS,		
SCARUS,		
DERCETAS,		
DEMETRIUS,		
PHILO,		
MECÆNAS,	}	friends to Cæsar.
AGRIPPA,		
DOLABELLA,		
PROCULEIUS,		
THYREUS,		
GALLUS,	}	friends to Pompey.
MENAS,		
MENECRATES,		
VARRIUS,		
TAURUS, lieutenant-general to Cæsar.		
CANIDIUS, lieutenant-general to Antony.		
SILIUS, an officer in Ventidius's army.		
EUPHRONIUS, an ambassador from Antony to Cæsar.		
ALEXAS,	}	attendants on Cleopatra.
MARDIAN, a Eunuch,		
SELEUCUS,		
DIOMEDES,		
A Soothsayer.		
A Clown.		
CLEOPATRA, queen of Egypt.		
OCTAVIA, sister to Cæsar and wife to Antony.		
CHARMIAN,	}	attendants on Cleopatra.
IRAS,		

Officers, Soldiers, Messengers, and other Attendants.

SCENE : *In several parts of the Roman empire.*

Antony and Cleopatra

DURATION OF TIME

Dramatic Time.—Twelve days with intervals.

- Day 1. I. 1.-4.
Interval.
,, 2. I. 5. ; II. 1.-3.
,, 3. II. 4.
Interval.
,, 4. II. 5.-7.
[III. 3.] Interval?
,, 5. III. 1., 2.
Interval.
,, 6. III. 4., 5.
Interval.
,, 7. III. 6.
Interval.
,, 8. III. 7.
,, 9. III. 8.-10.
Interval.
,, 10. III. 11.-13. ; IV. 1.-3.
,, 11. IV. 4.-9.
,, 12. IV. 10.-15. ; V.

Historic Time.—From about 40 B.C. (the death of Fulvia, I. 2.) to 30 B.C. (the death of Cleopatra).

INTRODUCTION

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA was first published in the Folio of 1623, as the last but one in order of the 'Tragedies.' It is included in the list of plays entered in the Stationers' Register, in the same year, as 'not formerly entered to any man.' It is likely, nevertheless, that a play issued with the same title by the same publisher, Blount, on May 20, 1608, was Shakespeare's tragedy.

This conjectural inference is the sole scrap of external evidence we possess for the date of the play. But it is in excellent accord with the internal evidence of style, verse, and dramatic treatment. In conception, *Antony and Cleopatra* has most affinity, among the greater tragedies, with *Macbeth*, which probably appeared in the previous year. Its versification, on the other hand, is already touched with the symptoms of his latest manner; the obtrusive symmetries of lyrical verse are flung aside or broken up more decisively than ever before. Rhyme all but vanishes, and we meet practically for the first time with the complete disregard of verse-structure in the distribution of pauses; in particular, with the weak monosyllable at the end of the line, known as a 'weak ending.'¹ A speech like the following occurs in no previous play:—

¹ There are twenty-eight 'weak endings' in *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Antony and Cleopatra

Cæs. I must be laugh'd at,
If, or for nothing or a little, I
Should say myself offended, and with you
Chiefly i' the world ; more laugh'd at, that I should
Once name you derogately, when to sound your name
It not concern'd me. (ii. 2. 30-35.)

One may detect in the bold yet effective poisoning of such verses as these another phase of that 'happy valiancy'¹ which Coleridge detected in the style of this play. In all these points *Antony and Cleopatra* stands in the sharpest contrast with *Julius Cæsar*, which it ostensibly continues, and in close relation to *Coriolanus*, remote as its imperial theme lies, historically, from the parochial conflicts of the early republic. Brutus and the earlier Antony are admirably heightened reproductions of their prototypes in Plutarch, and the whole ethical tone and feeling of the play reflects that of the *Lives*: the later Antony, though founded upon Plutarch's hints, is a supreme poetical creation, Shakespearean and unique as Hamlet himself.

Like the story of Cæsar, that of Antony had early attracted the more scholarly dramatists of modern Europe. Cleopatra shared with Dido, Sophonisba, Antigone, the first honours of the Italian stage; the classicists of the French Pléiade applauded the *Cléopâtre Captive* of Jodelle and the *Marc-Antoine* of Garnier. In England, too, it was among the sparse cultivators of an academic drama that the subject first found favour: Sidney's sister translated Garnier's *Marc-Antoine*; Samuel Daniel wrote a *Cleopatra* to match (1594). Neither had, apparently, the slightest influence upon Shakespeare. Later English dramatists, on the other hand, even when dealing with other

¹ ' *Felicitèr audax* is the motto works, even as it is the general motto of all his works compared that of Shakespeare's other with those of other poets.'

Introduction

phases of Cleopatra's story, wrote obviously under his spell. Fletcher in *The False One* (on her *amour* with Julius Cæsar) draws the trail of his coarser fancy over the Cleopatra of Shakespeare. Dryden, half a century later, produced, under the stimulus of rivalry, the best that he was capable of, in his *All for Love* (1678).

In Plutarch's *Life of Marcus Antonius* Shakespeare found the story of Antony and Cleopatra told with great literary art and a realism which loses nothing in the hands of his translators, Amyot and North. Plutarch's grandfather was Antony's contemporary, and tales of the miseries of Greek provincials and of the fabulous profusion of Egypt were still current in his family.¹ Few men of his day were better fitted than this thoughtful Greek observer of the Roman world to portray the tragic collapse of Roman nerve and stamina in the arms of the Greek enchantress on the throne of Egypt. The subject also suited his taste for strongly marked ethical light and shade. It resembled a kind of political 'Choice of Hercules,' where Antony, unlike his fabled ancestor, preferred Pleasure to Virtue. Plutarch, however, throws the full burden of the tragic issue upon Cleopatra. It is in these solemn words that he introduces the final phase of his career: '*Antonius being thus inclined, the last and extremest mischief of all other (to wit the love of Cleopatra) lighted on him, who did waken and stir up many vices yet hidden in him, and were never seen to any; and if any spark of goodness or hope of rising were left him, Cleopatra quenched it straight and made it worse than before.*'

This Plutarchian conception Shakespeare entirely adopted, together with almost all the detail in which it is worked out. It fell in with the disposition

¹ Cf. North's translation in *Shakespeare's Library*, iii. pp. 346, 397.

Antony and Cleopatra

apparent in the dramas of the preceding years,—in *Lear*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Macbeth*,—to connect tragic ruin with the intervention of a woman. Plutarch's Cleopatra was already an assemblage of all that is fatal in womanhood. With the wit, grace, and courtesan coquetry of Cressida she combined the sagacious craft of Lady Macbeth and the tigress cruelty of Regan. Shakespeare adds no single trait, but he makes the whole tingle with vitality and throb with beauty. Plutarch sounds the notes of her complex nature one by one, with sober precision and *doctrinaire* emphasis; Shakespeare flings them off in an amazing scherzo of inexhaustible fascination and surprise. Plutarch's Cleopatra has as many moods, but it is only in Shakespeare's that they flash in and out with the chameleon-like swiftness which extorts from the caustic Enobarbus his famous tribute to the undoer of his lord: 'Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety.' Entire scenes are evolved out of a matter-of-fact statement, or a merely implicit situation. Cleopatra's frenzy at the news of Antony's marriage (ii. 5.) is an admirable imagination of Shakespeare's own; and her wonderful half-real, half-acted penitence after deserting him at Actium (iii. 11. 25 f.), is built upon these simple words: [when Antony came on board] '*he saw her not at his first coming, nor she him, but went and sat down alone in the prow of his ship and said never a word, clapping his head between both his hands. . . . But when he arrived at the head of Ténarus, there Cleopatra's women first brought Antonius and Cleopatra to speak together.*' In Shakespeare we see Cleopatra led by Charmian and Iras where Antony sits in his despair.

Eros. Nay, gentle madam, to him, comfort him.

Iras. Do, most dear queen.

Cleo. Let me sit down. O Juno!

Introduction

Antony breaks into a wild cry as he remembers his ancient prowess and Octavius's :—

Yes, my lord, yes ; he at Philippi kept
His sword e'en like a dancer ; while I struck
The lean and wrinkled Cassius ;

yet now—No matter.

Cleo. Ah, stand by.

Iras. Go to him, madam, speak to him :
He is unqualified with very shame.

Cleo. Well then, sustain me : O !

Supported by them she falls before him ; and a 'Pardon, pardon !' exquisitely uttered, with wet eyes, twice or thrice, suffices to change his delirious despair into a rapture of lyric passion :—

Fall not a tear, I say ; one of them rates
All that is won and lost.

The reconciliation is more pathetic than the wrath. Shakespeare has communicated a subtle flavour of artifice to Cleopatra's serious moods. He also hints the background of passion in her skittish ones. Plutarch describes, among other 'foolish sports,' which '*it were too fond a part of me to reckon up,*' how Cleopatra played a trick upon Antony 'when he went to angle for fish,' by commanding one of her men '*to dive under water . . . and to put some old salt-fish upon his bait. . . . When he had hung the fish on his hook, Antonius, thinking he had taken a fish indeed, snatched up his line presently. Then they all fell a-laughing.*' Thus crudely obtruded, this farcical incident would have endangered the dignity of Antony : Shakespeare allows us to see it only mellowed by half-pathetic reminiscence ; and its memory is effaced the next moment by her outburst of wild eagerness at the arrival of news from him :—

Antony and Cleopatra

Char. 'Twas merry when
You wager'd on your angling ; when your diver
Did hang a salt-fish on his hook, which he
With fervency drew up.

Cleo. That time,—O times !—
I laugh'd him out of patience ; and that night
I laugh'd him into patience.

Enter a Messenger.

O, from Italy !
Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in mine ears,
That long time have been barren ! . . . (ii. 5.)

In the final catastrophe the Shakespearean Cleopatra preserves more completely than Plutarch's this finely-tempered mixture of coquetry and love. When Antony is brought to her monument to die (iv. 15.), her grief finds vent in moving hyperboles, but she does not rend her garments, or her face ; nor does she, when visited by Cæsar, receive him '*Naked in her smock, with her hair plucked from her head, her voice small and trembling, her eyes sunk into her head with continual blubbering, and moreover . . . the most part of her stomach torn in sunder.*'¹ These were the signs of a grief, not deeper, perhaps, but certainly less concerned with its own dignity of pose and artistic effect than hers. Plutarch's Cleopatra dies in her royal robes ; but there is no further hint than this of the Shakespearean Cleopatra's superb dying speech,—with its lightning interchanges of passion, pathos, theatrical self-consciousness, and malicious triumph. Her 'immortal longings' prompt her to die with the utmost spectacular *éclat*. She tingles with exultation at dying nobly 'in the high Roman fashion,' at so little inconvenience, and her thought flies at once to Antony's applause and Cæsar's baffled rage. She renounces the flesh, she feels herself all 'fire and air,' and a few moments later she is snatching the

¹ North, *2.s.*, p. 412.

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deadly asp to her arm in jealous frenzy, lest her dead waiting-woman should receive Antony's first kiss, 'which is my heaven to have,' in the Elysian fields.

The tragic interest, however, evidently centres not in Cleopatra, but in the victim of her 'strong toil of grace.' In tracing the operation of her spell upon Antony, Shakespeare on the whole follows Plutarch's facts as far as they go; but he interprets and expands them in the light of his own finer psychology and humaner ethics. Some coarser and duller touches in both characters he effaces. The hoyden disappears in her;¹ the vulgar debauchee, the sour misanthrope, and the gull, in him. In her most wilful and wanton moods she is still the queen; and Antony, revelling or raging, blindly rushing on his fate or desperately succumbing to it, is still the great-hearted man of genius. His subjection to Cleopatra is even more absolute in proportion as it acts through subtler and more complicated sources of attraction. It is just as fatal to his judgment and, for a moment, to his instinct of military honour. His fatuous decision to 'fight at sea,' and his unmanly flight in the train of Cleopatra and her fugitive galleys, seal his fate as surely in the play as in the history; and Shakespeare exposes them, through the mouth of Enobarbus, as incisively as Plutarch. But for Plutarch the whole relation of Antony to Cleopatra, and indeed of lovers in general, is typified in this fatuous oblivion of his better self. '*There Antonius showed plainly,*' he indignantly comments, *that he . . . was not his own*

¹ 'And sometime also when he would go up and down the city disguised like a slave in the night, and would peer into poor men's windows and their shops, and scold and brawl with them within the house, Cleopatra

would be also in a chamber-maid's array, and amble up and down the streets with him, so that sometimes Antonius bare away both mocks and blows' (North, *u.s.*, p. 348).

Antony and Cleopatra

man ; (proving that true which an old man spake in mirth, that the soul of a lover lived in another body, and not in his own) he was so carried away with the vain love of this woman, as if he had been glued to her. But for Shakespeare this rough-and-ready analysis of the love-spell was clearly inadequate. Enobarbus himself allows that the 'diminution in our captain's brain restores his heart' (iii. 13. 198); and if we add that the heart in its turn reacted upon the brain, the wonderful Fourth Act may be called an expansion of those closing words of the Third. The entire Act, with its swift changes of scene and mood, its superb alternations of rapture, despair, glory, rage, forgiveness, and farewell, represents some two pages of plain prose narrative. Regarded as a contribution to the action these fifteen scenes are certainly disproportionate. The land-fight which Antony wins (iv. 7.-9.) and the sea-fight which he loses (iv. 10.-12.) do not change the issue already decided at Actium. But these oscillations of the outward plot open new and wonderful glimpses into the being of Antony and Cleopatra themselves. The sense of impending doom calls out the finer elements of them both. Antony is no longer the effeminate fugitive, but the idolised chieftain, whose hinted foreboding of the end—

Haply you shall not see me more ; or if,
A mangled shadow,

'turns his men to women'; Cleopatra forgets at moments the caprices of the courtesan, arms her lord for battle, and welcomes him home like a wife :

Thou fumblest, Eros ; and my queen's a squire
More tight at this than thou. . . .

'My nightingale,' he greets her, 'we have beat them to their beds.' The second desertion of her ships (iv. 12.) to Cæsar gives him once more 'savage cause' for

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rage ; but his fury, though it still outroars the horned herd, has the poignancy of a dying cry, and gives way at moments, as in the wonderful little scene with Eros (iv. 14.), to strangely intense imaginings of death.

No other figure is allowed to compete with these two. The entire political action, so far as they do not take part in it, falls palpably into the background, and its feuds and factions are outlined in low relief. Antony's doings in the Parthian wars are wholly omitted ; his long sojourn in Rome becomes a brief visit. Of his two wives, Fulvia is only heard of as a troublesome thorn in his flesh, and Octavia's 'holy, cold, and still conversation' is denuded of charm for us as for Antony. He has an exquisite phrase for her stillness, as for everything else ; but his marriage is purely diplomatic, even nominal, and it hardly needed the shrewdness of Enobarbus to foresee that 'the band that seems to tie their friendship together will be the very strangler of their amity'¹ (ii. 6. 128). Octavius himself, the supreme force in the mechanical movement of the action, but, like his sister, unconcerned in its vital tragedy, is drawn, like his uncle in *Julius Cæsar*, with a cold and unsympathetic hand. In *Richard II.* Shakespeare had drawn a far more engaging portrait of the born ruler profiting by the fatuities of a brilliant child of impulse. The patriotic and political animus of the Histories allows the balance of interest to tremble between Bolingbroke and Richard, as it certainly does not between Cæsar and Antony. To the Shakespeare of 1607, engrossed with the pathology of genius, the mastery of the world by cool sagacity was of less interest than the loss of it

¹ He has 'Forborne the getting of a lawful race' (iii. 13. 107). Plutarch's Octavia for some years effectually replaces Cleopatra in Antony's love, bears him several children, and succeeds in reconciling husband and brother when apparently on the verge of the conflict which actually broke out three years later.

Antony and Cleopatra

in a fine intoxication of passion and poetry. The conflict is drawn, too, with touches of the mystic fatalism which, through the medium of Plutarch, seems to have coloured Shakespeare's conception of the great catastrophes of the ancient world. Portents foreshadow Antony's fall as they had done Cæsar's; unearthly music is heard on the eve of the last battle: 'Tis the god Hercules,' say the soldiers, 'whom Antony loved, now leaves him' (iv. 3.). A soothsayer warns him to avoid Cæsar, for 'near him thy angel becomes a fear as being o'erpower'd'; and Shakespeare applied the phrase to Macbeth's subduing fear of Banquo. But Shakespeare has provided a new and significant augurer of his own. Of the character of Enobarbus he found nothing in Plutarch beyond the brief statement that, before Actium, he deserted to Cæsar, whereupon '*Antonius was very sorry for it, but yet he sent after him all his carriage, train, and men: and the same Domitius [Enobarbus], as though he gave him to understand that he repented his open treason, died immediately after.*' Enobarbus deserts only after the battle, when Antony's fortunes are desperate (iv. 5.); and his heart-broken remorse attests the passionate loyalty which Antony inspired in the men most keenly alive to his fatuities. Enobarbus had not fathomed Antony's generosity; but he had fathomed his weakness, and chronicles each stage of its advance with caustic precision. Like Menenius in *Coriolanus*, and the Fool in *Lear*, he lays bare, under a guise of privileged plain-speaking, the hidden drift of events, and pricks bubbles of illusion which dazzle every one else. Cleopatra herself feels the sting of his disapproval, and condescends to expostulate with him—

Thou hast forspoke my being in these wars,
And say'st it is not fit—

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only to receive the blunt rejoinder :—

Well, is it, is it ?

With admirable tact Shakespeare makes this same Enobarbus the mouthpiece of the glowing description of Cleopatra's majestic voyage up the Cydnus to meet Antony. The magnificence which stirs his sober, analytic brain to this fervour of lyrical hyperbole, has its full effect upon us.¹ And the Aristophanic humour of the banquet on Pompey's galley (ii. 7.) derives its undertone of irony mainly from the two sardonic onlookers in the background : Enobarbus, arranging the masters of the world, hand in hand, in a tipsy Bacchanal ; and Menas, only deterred by a drunkard's maudlin scruple from cutting the cable on which their lives and the fortunes of ancient civilisation depend.

¹ Dryden, with less than his usual literary instinct, gave the corresponding description in his *All for Love* to Antony. We naturally discount the lover's

enthusiasm. Cf. Mr. Wendell's excellent comparison of the two versions with Plutarch and with each other (*William Shakespeare*, p. 314).

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Alexandria. A room in Cleopatra's palace.*

Enter DEMETRIUS and PHILO.

Phi. Nay, but this dotage of our general's
O'erflows the measure : those his goodly eyes,
That o'er the files and musters of the war
Have glow'd like plated Mars, now bend, now turn,
The office and devotion of their view
Upon a tawny front : his captain's heart,
Which in the scuffles of great fights hath burst
The buckles on his breast, reneges all temper,
And is become the bellows and the fan
To cool a gipsy's lust.

*Flourish. Enter ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, her Ladies,
the Train, with Eunuchs fanning her.*

Look, where they come : 10
Take but good note, and you shall see in him
The triple pillar of the world transform'd

8. *reneges* (disyllabic), re- virs. Antony ruled the eastern
nounces, provinces of the empire ; Octa-

12. *The triple pillar*, one of vius the western ; Lepidus
the three pillars, *i.e.* the trium- Italy.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT I

Into a strumpet's fool : behold and see.

Cleo. If it be love indeed, tell me how much.

Ant. There's beggary in the love that can be reckon'd.

Cleo. I'll set a bourn how far to be beloved.

Ant. Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth.

Enter an Attendant.

Att. News, my good lord, from Rome.

Ant. Grates me : the sum.

Cleo. Nay, hear them, Antony :

Fulvia perchance is angry ; or, who knows 20

If the scarce-bearded Cæsar have not sent

His powerful mandate to you, ' Do this, or this ;

Take in that kingdom, and enfranchise that ;

Perform 't, or else we damn thee.'

Ant. How, my love !

Cleo. Perchance ! nay, and most like :

You must not stay here longer, your dismissal

Is come from Cæsar ; therefore hear it, Antony.

Where's Fulvia's process ? Cæsar's I would say ?
both ?

Call in the messengers. As I am Egypt's queen,

Thou blushest, Antony, and that blood of thine 30

Is Cæsar's homager : else so thy cheek pays shame

When shrill-tongued Fulvia scolds. The messengers !

Ant. Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch
Of the ranged empire fall ! Here is my space.

Kingdoms are clay : our dungy earth alike

Feeds beast as man : the nobleness of life

Is to do thus ; when such a mutual pair

[*Embracing.*

16. *bound*, boundary.

18. *Grates*, annoys, vexes.

28. *process*, mandate.

And such a twain can do't, in which I bind,
On pain of punishment, the world to weet
We stand up peerless.

Cleo. Excellent falsehood !
Why did he marry Fulvia, and not love her ?
I'll seem the fool I am not ; Antony
Will be himself.

Ant. But stirr'd by Cleopatra.
Now, for the love of Love and her soft hours,
Let's not confound the time with conference harsh :
There's not a minute of our lives should stretch
Without some pleasure now. What sport to-night ?

Cleo. Hear the ambassadors.

Ant. Fie, wrangling queen !
Whom every thing becomes, to chide, to laugh,
To weep ; whose every passion fully strives
To make itself, in thee, fair and admired !
No messenger but thine ; and all alone
To-night we 'll wander through the streets and note
The qualities of people. Come, my queen ;
Last night you did desire it. Speak not to us.

[*Exeunt Ant. and Cleo. with their train.*

Dem. Is Cæsar with Antonius prized so slight?

Phi. Sir, sometimes, when he is not Antony,
He comes too short of that great property
Which still should go with Antony.

Dem. I am full sorry
That he approves the common liar, who
Thus speaks of him at Rome: but I will hope
Of better deeds to-morrow. Rest you happy!

[*Exeunt.*

39. *to weet*, to wit, to know.

45. *confound*, waste, consume.

58. *that great property, that*
peculiar greatness.

60. *approves*, confirms.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT I

SCENE II. *The same. Another room.*

Enter CHARMIAN, IRAS, ALEXAS, *and a* Soothsayer.

Char. Lord Alexas, sweet Alexas, most any thing Alexas, almost most absolute Alexas, where's the soothsayer that you praised so to the queen? O, that I knew this husband, which, you say, must charge his horns with garlands!

Alex. Soothsayer!

Sooth. Your will?

Char. Is this the man? Is't you, sir, that know things?

Sooth. In nature's infinite book of secrecy
A little I can read.

Alex. Show him your hand.

10

Enter ENOBARBUS.

Eno. Bring in the banquet quickly; wine enough
Cleopatra's health to drink.

Char. Good sir, give me good fortune.

Sooth. I make not, but foresee.

Char. Pray, then, foresee me one.

Sooth. You shall be yet far fairer than you are.

Char. He means in flesh.

Irás. No, you shall paint when you are old.

Char. Wrinkles forbid!

Alex. Vex not his prescience; be attentive.

20

Char. Hush!

Sooth. You shall be more loving than beloved.

Char. I had rather heat my liver with drinking.

Alex. Nay, hear him.

Char. Good now, some excellent fortune! Let
me be married to three kings in a forenoon, and

widow them all : let me have a child at fifty, to whom Herod of Jewry may do homage : find me to marry me with Octavius Cæsar, and companion me with my mistress.

30

Sooth. You shall outlive the lady whom you serve.

Char. O excellent ! I love long life better than figs.

Sooth. You have seen and proved a fairer former fortune

Than that which is to approach.

Char. Then belike my children shall have no names : prithee, how many boys and wenches must I have ?

Sooth. If every of your wishes had a womb, And fertile every wish, a million.

Char. Out, fool ! I forgive thee for a witch.

40

Alex. You think none but your sheets are privy to your wishes.

Char. Nay, come, tell Iras hers.

Alex. We'll know all our fortunes.

Eno. Mine, and most of our fortunes to-night shall be—drunk to bed.

Iras. There's a palm presages chastity, if nothing else.

Char. E'en as the o'erflowing Nilus presageth famine.

50

Iras. Go, you wild bedfellow, you cannot soothsay.

Char. Nay, if an oily palm be not a fruitful prognostication, I cannot scratch mine ear. Prithee, tell her but a worky-day fortune.

Sooth. Your fortunes are alike.

40. *for a witch*, i.e. as being a wizard, and hence privileged to utter home-truths. 55. *worky-day*, i.e. ordinary, mediocre.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT I

Iras. But how, but how? give me particulars.

Sooth. I have said.

Iras. Am I not an inch of fortune better than she? 60

Char. Well, if you were but an inch of fortune better than I, where would you choose it?

Iras. Not in my husband's nose.

Char. Our worser thoughts heavens mend! Alexas,—come, his fortune, his fortune! O, let him marry a woman that cannot go, sweet Isis, I beseech thee! and let her die too, and give him a worse! and let worse follow worse, till the worst of all follow him laughing to his grave, fifty-fold a cuckold! Good Isis, hear me this prayer, though 70
thou deny me a matter of more weight; good Isis, I beseech thee!

Iras. Amen. Dear goddess, hear that prayer of the people! for, as it is a heart-breaking to see a handsome man loose-wived, so it is a deadly sorrow to behold a foul knave uncuckolded: therefore, dear Isis, keep decorum, and fortune him accordingly!

Char. Amen.

Alex. Lo, now, if it lay in their hands to make 80
me a cuckold, they would make themselves whores, but they 'ld do 't!

Eno. Hush! here comes Antony.

Char. Not he; the queen.

Enter CLEOPATRA.

Cleo. Saw you my lord?

Eno. No, lady.

66. *Isis* divided with the other pantheon. To pose as a second Egyptian deity Osiris all the qualities and attributes which Isis was one of Cleopatra's belonged to the whole Roman affectations.

Antony and Cleopatra

Cleo.

Was he not here?

Char. No, madam.*Cleo.* He was disposed to mirth; but on the sudden

A Roman thought hath struck him. Enobarbus!

Eno. Madam?*Cleo.* Seek him, and bring him hither. Where's Alexas?*Alex.* Here, at your service. My lord approaches.*Cleo.* We will not look upon him: go with us.[*Exeunt.*]

90

Enter ANTONY *with a Messenger and Attendants.**Mess.* Fulvia thy wife first came into the field.*Ant.* Against my brother Lucius?*Mess.* Ay:But soon that war had end, and the time's state
Made friends of them, jointing their force 'gainst
Cæsar;Whose better issue in the war, from Italy,
Upon the first encounter, drave them.*Ant.* Well, what worst?*Mess.* The nature of bad news infects the teller.*Ant.* When it concerns the fool or coward. On: 100Things that are past are done with me. 'Tis thus;
Who tells me true, though in his tale lie death,
I hear him as he flatter'd.*Mess.*

Labienus—

This is stiff news—hath, with his Parthian force,
Extended Asia from Euphrates;

92. *Fulvia thy wife*, Antony she joined with Antony's brother
was Fulvia's third husband; he Lucius against Augustus. She
divorced her in order to marry failed in all her intrigues, and
Cleopatra. Failing to incite finally died of a broken heart.
Augustus Cæsar against Antony,

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT I

His conquering banner shook from Syria
To Lydia and to Ionia ;
Whilst—

Ant. Antony, thou wouldst say,—

Mess. O, my lord !

Ant. Speak to me home, mince not the general
tongue :

Name Cleopatra as she is call'd in Rome ; 110

Rail thou in Fulvia's phrase, and taunt my faults
With such full license as both truth and malice
Have power to utter. O, then we bring forth
weeds,

When our quick minds lie still, and our ills told us
Is as our earring. Fare thee well awhile.

Mess. At your noble pleasure. [Exit.

Ant. From Sicyon, ho, the news ! Speak there !

First Att. The man from Sicyon, is there such
an one ?

Sec. Att. He stays upon your will.

Ant. Let him appear.

These strong Egyptian fetters I must break, 120
Or lose myself in dotage.

Enter another Messenger.

What are you ?

Sec. Mess. Fulvia thy wife is dead.

Ant. Where died she ?

Sec. Mess. In Sicyon :

Her length of sickness, with what else more serious
Importeth thee to know, this bears.

[Gives a letter.

Ant. Forbear me.

[Exit Sec. Messenger.

There's a great spirit gone ! Thus did I desire it :
What our contempt doth often hurl from us,

115. *earring*, ploughing.

We wish it ours again ; the present pleasure,
 By revolution lowering, does become
 The opposite of itself : she 's good, being gone ; 130
 The hand could pluck her back that shoved her on.
 I must from this enchanting queen break off :
 Ten thousand harms, more than the ills I know,
 My idleness doth hatch. How now ! Enobarbus !

Re-enter ENOBARBUS.

Eno. What 's your pleasure, sir ?

Ant. I must with haste from hence.

Eno. Why then we kill all our women : we
 see how mortal an unkindness is to them ; if they
 suffer our departure, death 's the word.

Ant. I must be gone. 140

Eno. Under a compelling occasion let women
 die : it were pity to cast them away for nothing ;
 though, between them and a great cause, they
 should be esteemed nothing. Cleopatra, catch-
 ing but the least noise of this, dies instantly ;
 I have seen her die twenty times upon far poorer
 moment : I do think there is mettle in death,
 which commits some loving act upon her, she
 hath such a celerity in dying.

Ant. She is cunning past man's thought. 150

Eno. Alack, sir, no ; her passions are made
 of nothing but the finest part of pure love : we
 cannot call her winds and waters sighs and tears ;
 they are greater storms and tempests than alma-
 nacs can report : this cannot be cunning in her ;
 if it be, she makes a shower of rain as well
 as Jove.

Ant. Would I had never seen her !

Eno. O, sir, you had then left unseen a won-

129. *By revolution lowering,* time.
 decreasing with the passage of 147. *mettle,* vigour.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT I

derful piece of work; which not to have been 160
blest withal would have discredited your travel.

Ant. Fulvia is dead.

Eno. Sir?

Ant. Fulvia is dead.

Eno. Fulvia!

Ant. Dead.

Eno. Why, sir, give the gods a thankful sacrifice. When it pleaseth their deities to take the wife of a man from him, it shows to man the tailors of the earth, comforting therein, that 170
when old robes are worn out, there are members to make new. If there were no more women but Fulvia, then had you indeed a cut, and the case to be lamented: this grief is crowned with consolation; your old smock brings forth a new petticoat: and indeed the tears live in an onion that should water this sorrow.

Ant. The business she hath broached in the state Cannot endure my absence.

Eno. And the business you have broached 180
here cannot be without you; especially that of Cleopatra's, which wholly depends on your abode.

Ant. No more light answers. Let our officers Have notice what we purpose. I shall break The cause of our expedience to the queen, And get her leave to part. For not alone The death of Fulvia, with more urgent touches, Do strongly speak to us, but the letters too Of many our contriving friends in Rome Petition us at home: Sextus Pompeius 190
Hath given the dare to Cæsar, and commands The empire of the sea: our slippery people, Whose love is never link'd to the deserver Till his deserts are past, begin to throw

191. *dare*, defiance.

Pompey the Great and all his dignities
 Upon his son ; who, high in name and power,
 Higher than both in blood and life, stands up
 For the main soldier : whose quality, going on,
 The sides o' the world may danger : much is
 breeding,
 Which, like the courser's hair, hath yet but life, 200
 And not a serpent's poison. Say, our pleasure,
 To such whose place is under us, requires
 Our quick remove from hence.
Eno. I shall do 't. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same. Another room.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, *and*
 ALEXAS.

Cleo. Where is he ?

Char. I did not see him since.

Cleo. See where he is, who's with him, what
 he does :

I did not send you : if you find him sad,
 Say I am dancing ; if in mirth, report
 That I am sudden sick : quick, and return.

[*Exit Alexas.*

Char. Madam, methinks, if you did love him
 dearly,

You do not hold the method to enforce
 The like from him.

Cleo. What should I do, I do not ?

<p>196. Of Pompey the Great's sons Oneus was killed at the battle of Munda, while Sextus, after fruitless attempts at supreme power, was defeated in a naval engagement by Octavius and Lepidus, and was</p>	<p>finally executed by Antony's orders about 35 B.C. 198. <i>quality</i>, power. 200. <i>the courser's hair</i> was popularly supposed to change to a 'horse-hair eel' if put in water. L.</p>
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Antony and Cleopatra

ACT I

Char. In each thing give him way, cross him in nothing.

Cleo. Thou teachest like a fool; the way to lose him.

Char. Tempt him not so too far; I wish, forbear:

In time we hate that which we often fear.
But here comes Antony.

Enter ANTONY.

Cleo. I am sick and sullen.

Ant. I am sorry to give breathing to my purpose,—

Cleo. Help me away, dear Charmian; I shall fall:

It cannot be thus long, the sides of nature
Will not sustain it.

Ant. Now, my dearest queen,—

Cleo. Pray you, stand farther from me.

Ant. What's the matter?

Cleo. I know, by that same eye, there's some good news.

What says the married woman? You may go:

Would she had never given you leave to come!

Let her not say 'tis I that keep you here,

I have no power upon you; hers you are.

Ant. The gods best know—

Cleo. O, never was there queen
So mightily betray'd! yet at the first
I saw the treasons planted.

Ant. Cleopatra,—

Cleo. Why should I think you can be mine and true,

Though you in swearing shake the throned gods,
Who have been false to Fulvia? Riotous madness,
To be entangled with those mouth-made vows,

Which break themselves in swearing !

Ant.

Most sweet queen,—

Cleo. Nay, pray you, seek no colour for your
going,

But bid farewell, and go : when you sued staying,
Then was the time for words : no going then ;
Eternity was in our lips and eyes,
Bliss in our brows' bent, none our parts so poor,
But was a race of heaven : they are so still,
Or thou, the greatest soldier of the world,
Art turn'd the greatest liar.

Ant.

How now, lady !

Cleo. I would I had thy inches ; thou shouldst
know

40

There were a heart in Egypt.

Ant.

Hear me, queen :

The strong necessity of time commands
Our services awhile ; but my full heart
Remains in use with you. Our Italy
Shines o'er with civil swords : Sextus Pompeius
Makes his approaches to the port of Rome :
Equality of two domestic powers
Breed scrupulous faction : the hated, grown to
strength,

Are newly grown to love : the condemn'd Pompey,
Rich in his father's honour, creeps apace

50

Into the hearts of such as have not thrived
Upon the present state, whose numbers threaten ;
And quietness, grown sick of rest, would purge
By any desperate change. My more particular,
And that which most with you should safe my
going,

Is Fulvia's death.

36. *bent*, commonly used of the eyes' expression for *look* ; here applied to the forehead. 36. *parts*, qualities essential to our whole being.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT I

Cleo. Though age from folly could not give me freedom,

It does from childishness : can Fulvia die ?

Ant. She's dead, my queen :

Look here, and at thy sovereign leisure read
The garboils she awaked ; at the last, best :
See when and where she died. 60

Cleo. O most false love !
Where be the sacred vials thou shouldst fill
With sorrowful water ? Now I see, I see,
In Fulvia's death, how mine received shall be.

Ant. Quarrel no more, but be prepared to know
The purposes I bear ; which are, or cease,
As you shall give the advice. By the fire
That quickens Nilus' slime, I go from hence
Thy soldier, servant, making peace or war 70
As thou affect'st.

Cleo. Cut my lace, Charmian, come ;
But let it be : I am quickly ill and well,
So Antony loves.

Ant. My precious queen, forbear ;
And give true evidence to his love, which stands
An honourable trial.

Cleo. So Fulvia told me.
I prithee, turn aside and weep for her ;
Then bid adieu to me, and say the tears
Belong to Egypt : good now, play one scene
Of excellent dissembling ; and let it look
Like perfect honour.

Ant. You'll heat my blood : no more. 80

Cleo. You can do better yet ; but this is meetly.

Ant. Now, by my sword,—

Cleo. And target. Still he mends ;
But this is not the best. Look, prithee, Charmian,
How this Herculean Roman does become

61. *garboils*, disturbances.

The carriage of his chafe.

Ant. I'll leave you, lady.

Cleo. Courteous lord, one word.
Sir, you and I must part, but that's not it ;
Sir, you and I have loved, but there's not it ;
That you know well : something it is I would,—
O, my oblivion is a very Antony, 90
And I am all forgotten.

Ant. But that your royalty
Holds idleness your subject, I should take you
For idleness itself.

Cleo. 'Tis sweating labour
To bear such idleness so near the heart
As Cleopatra this. But, sir, forgive me ;
Since my becomings kill me, when they do not
Eye well to you : your honour calls you hence ;
Therefore be deaf to my unpitied folly,
And all the gods go with you ! upon your sword
Sit laurel victory ! and smooth success 100
Be strew'd before your feet !

Ant. Let us go. Come ;
Our separation so abides and flies,
That thou residing here go'st yet with me,
And I hence fleeting here remain with thee.
Away ! [Exeunt.

SCENE IV. *Rome. Cæsar's house.*

Enter OCTAVIUS CÆSAR, *reading a letter,*
LEPIDUS, *and their Train.*

Cæs. You may see, Lepidus, and henceforth
know,
It is not Cæsar's natural vice to hate

96. *becomings*, graces.

97. *Eye*, appear.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT I

Our great competitor : from Alexandria
This is the news : he fishes, drinks and wastes
The lamps of night in revel : is not more manlike
Than Cleopatra ; nor the queen of Ptolemy
More womanly than he : hardly gave audience, or
Vouchsafed to think he had partners : you shall
find there

A man who is the abstract of all faults
That all men follow.

Lep. I must not think there are 10
Evils enow to darken all his goodness :
His faults in him seem as the spots of heaven,
More fiery by night's blackness ; hereditary,
Rather than purchased, what he cannot change,
Than what he chooses.

Cæs. You are too indulgent. Let us grant it is not
Amiss to tumble on the bed of Ptolemy,
To give a kingdom for a mirth, to sit
And keep the turn of tippling with a slave,
To reel the streets at noon and stand the buffet 20
With knaves that smell of sweat : say this becomes
him,—

As his composure must be rare indeed
Whom these things cannot blemish,—yet must
Antony

No way excuse his soils, when we do bear
So great weight in his lightness. If he fill'd
His vacancy with his voluptuousness,
Full surfeits, and the dryness of his bones,
Call on him for 't : but to confound such time,
That drums him from his sport, and speaks as loud
As his own state and ours, 'tis to be chid 30
As we rate boys, who, being mature in knowledge,
Pawn their experience to their present pleasure,
And so rebel to judgement.

28. *Call*, call to account.

Antony and Cleopatra

*Enter a Messenger.**Lep.* Here's more news.*Mess.* Thy biddings have been done ; and every hour,

Most noble Cæsar, shalt thou have report
 How 'tis abroad. Pompey is strong at sea ;
 And it appears he is beloved of those
 That only have fear'd Cæsar : to the ports
 The discontents repair, and men's reports
 Give him much wrong'd.

Cæs. I should have known no less : 40
 It hath been taught us from the primal state,
 That he which is was wish'd until he were ;
 And the ebb'd man, ne'er loved till ne'er worth
 love,

Comes dear'd by being lack'd. This common body,
 Like to a vagabond flag upon the stream,
 Goes to and back, lackeying the varying tide,
 To rot itself with motion.

Mess. Cæsar, I bring thee word,
 Menecrates and Menas, famous pirates,
 Make the sea serve them, which they ear and wound
 With keels of every kind : many hot inroads 50
 They make in Italy ; the borders maritime
 Lack blood to think on 't, and flush youth revolt :
 No vessel can peep forth, but 'tis as soon
 Taken as seen ; for Pompey's name strikes more
 Than could his war resisted.

Cæs. Antony,
 Leave thy lascivious wassails. When thou once
 Wast beaten from Modéna, where thou slew'st

39. *discontents*, discontented prime.
 persons, malcontents.

45. *flag*, the common yellow
 Iris.

52. *flush*, vigorous, in their

57. *Modéna* (for Ital.
 'Módéna,' Lat. 'Mútina'), an
 accentuation due to the analogy
 of Veróna, and the like.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT I

Hirtius and Pansa, consuls, at thy heel
 Did famine follow ; whom thou fought'st against,
 Though daintily brought up, with patience more 60
 Than savages could suffer : thou didst drink
 The stale of horses, and the gilded puddle
 Which beasts would cough at : thy palate then did
 deign

The roughest berry on the rudest hedge ;
 Yea, like the stag, when snow the pasture sheets,
 The barks of trees thou browsed'st. On the Alps
 It is reported thou didst eat strange flesh,
 Which some did die to look on : and all this—
 It wounds thine honour that I speak it now—
 Was borne so like a soldier, that thy cheek 70
 So much as lank'd not.

Lep. 'Tis pity of him.

Cæs. Let his shames quickly
 Drive him to Rome : 'tis time we twain
 Did show ourselves i' the field ; and to that end
 Assemble we immediate council : Pompey
 Thrives in our idleness.

Lep. To-morrow, Cæsar,
 I shall be furnish'd to inform you rightly
 Both what by sea and land I can be able
 To front this present time.

Cæs. Till which encounter,
 It is my business too. Farewell. 80

Lep. Farewell, my lord : what you shall know
 meantime
 Of stirs abroad, I shall beseech you, sir,
 To let me be partaker.

Cæs. Doubt not, sir ;
 I knew it for my bond. [*Exeunt.*]

59. *whom*, i.e. famine.

SCENE V. *Alexandria. Cleopatra's palace.*

*Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and
MARDIAN.*

Cleo. Charmian!

Char. Madam?

Cleo. Ha, ha!

Give me to drink mandragora.

Char. Why, madam?

Cleo. That I might sleep out this great gap of
time

My Antony is away.

Char. You think of him too much.

Cleo. O, 'tis treason!

Char. Madam, I trust, not so.

Cleo. Thou, eunuch Mardian!

Mar. What's your highness' pleasure?

Cleo. Not now to hear thee sing; I take no
pleasure

In aught an eunuch has: 'tis well for thee, 10

That, being unseminar'd, thy freer thoughts

May not fly forth of Egypt. Hast thou affections?

Mar. Yes, gracious madam.

Cleo. Indeed!

Mar. Not in deed, madam; for I can do nothing

But what indeed is honest to be done:

Yet have I fierce affections, and think

What Venus did with Mars.

Cleo. O Charmian,
Where think'st thou he is now? Stands he, or
sits he?

Or does he walk? or is he on his horse? 20

O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony!

Do bravely, horse! for wot'st thou whom thou movest?

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT I

The demi-Atlas of this earth, the arm
 And burgonet of men. He's speaking now,
 Or murmuring 'Where's my serpent of old Nile?'
 For so he calls me: now I feed myself
 With most delicious poison. Think on me,
 That am with Phœbus' amorous pinches black,
 And wrinkled deep in time? Broad-fronted Cæsar,
 When thou wast here above the ground, I was 30
 A morsel for a monarch: and great Pompey
 Would stand and make his eyes grow in my brow;
 There would he anchor his aspect and die
 With looking on his life.

Enter ALEXAS.

Alex. Sovereign of Egypt, hail!

Cleo. How much unlike art thou Mark Antony!
 Yet, coming from him, that great medicine hath
 With his tinct gilded thee.

How goes it with my brave Mark Antony?

Alex. Last thing he did, dear queen,
 He kiss'd,—the last of many doubled kisses,— 40
 This orient pearl. His speech sticks in my heart.

Cleo. Mine ear must pluck it thence.

Alex. 'Good friend,' quoth he,
 'Say, the firm Roman to great Egypt sends
 This treasure of an oyster; at whose foot,
 To mend the petty present, I will piece
 Her opulent throne with kingdoms; all the east,
 Say thou, shall call her mistress. So he nodded,
 And soberly did mount an arm-gaunt steed,

24. *burgonet*, a closely-fitting helmet.

33. *aspect*, glance.

48. *arm-gaunt*. The word has not been satisfactorily explained. Hanmer suggested 'arm-girt, Jackson 'war-gaunt,'

Lettsom 'rampaunt.' The context requires the horse to have been vigorous and high-spirited; the epithet may suggest this indirectly, the horse being 'lean from bearing arms in battle,' hence warlike.

Who neigh'd so high, that what I would have spoke
Was beastly dumb'd by him.

Cleo. What, was he sad or merry? 50

Alex. Like to the time o' the year between the
extremes

Of hot and cold, he was nor sad nor merry.

Cleo. O well-divided disposition! Note him,
Note him, good Charmian, 'tis the man; but note
him:

He was not sad, for he would shine on those
That make their looks by his; he was not merry,
Which seem'd to tell them his remembrance lay
In Egypt with his joy; but between both:

O heavenly mingle! Be'st thou sad or merry,
The violence of either thee becomes, 60
So does it no man else. Met'st thou my posts?

Alex. Ay, madam, twenty several messengers:
Why do you send so thick?

Cleo. Who's born that day
When I forget to send to Antony,
Shall die a beggar. Ink and paper, Charmian.
Welcome, my good Alexas. Did I, Charmian,
Ever love Cæsar so?

Char. O that brave Cæsar!

Cleo. Be choked with such another emphasis!
Say, the brave Antony.

Char. The valiant Cæsar!

Cleo. By Isis, I will give thee bloody teeth, 70
If thou with Cæsar paragon again
My man of men.

Char. By your most gracious pardon
I sing but after you.

Cleo. My salad days,
When I was green in judgement: cold in blood,
To say as I said then! But, come, away;
Get me ink and paper:

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

He shall have every day a several greeting,
Or I'll unpeople Egypt. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I. *Messina. Pompey's house.*

*Enter POMPEY, MENEKRATES, and MENAS,
in warlike manner.*

Pom. If the great gods be just, they shall assist
The deeds of justest men.

Mene. Know, worthy Pompey,
That what they do delay, they not deny.

Pom. Whiles we are suitors to their throne,
decays
The thing we sue for.

Mene. We, ignorant of ourselves,
Beg often our own harms, which the wise powers
Deny us for our good ; so find we profit
By losing of our prayers.

Pom. I shall do well :
The people love me, and the sea is mine ;
My powers are crescent, and my auguring hope 10
Says it will come to the full. Mark Antony
In Egypt sits at dinner, and will make
No wars without doors : Cæsar gets money where
He loses hearts : Lepidus flatters both,
Of both is flatter'd, but he neither loves,
Nor either cares for him.

Men. Cæsar and Lepidus
Are in the field : a mighty strength they carry.

Pom. Where have you this ? 'tis false.

77. *several, separate.*

Antony and Cleopatra

Men. From Silvius, sir.

Pom. He dreams: I know they are in Rome together,

Looking for Antony. But all the charms of love, 20
Salt Cleopatra, soften thy waned lip!

Let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with both!

Tie up the libertine in a field of feasts,

Keep his brain fuming; Epicurean cooks

Sharpen with cloyless sauce his appetite;

That sleep and feeding may prorogue his honour

Even till a Lethe'd dulness!

Enter VARRIUS.

How now, Varrius!

Var. This is most certain that I shall deliver:

Mark Antony is every hour in Rome

Expected: since he went from Egypt 'tis

A space for further travel. 30

Pom. I could have given less matter

A better ear. Menas, I did not think

This amorous surfeiter would have donn'd his helm

For such a petty war: his soldiership

Is twice the other twain: but let us rear

The higher our opinion, that our stirring

Can from the lap of Egypt's widow pluck

The ne'er-lust-wearied Antony.

Men. I cannot hope

Cæsar and Antony shall well greet together:

His wife that's dead did trespasses to Cæsar;

His brother warr'd upon him; although, I think,

Not moved by Antony. 40

Pom. I know not, Menas,

How lesser enmities may give way to greater.

Were't not that we stand up against them all,

35. rear the higher our opinion, deem our reputation the greater.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

'Twere pregnant they should square between
 themselves ;
 For they have entertained cause enough
 To draw their swords : but how the fear of us
 May cement their divisions and bind up
 The petty difference, we yet not know.
 Be 't as our gods will have 't ! It only stands 50
 Our lives upon to use our strongest hands.
 Come, Menas. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Rome. The house of Lepidus.*

Enter ENOBARBUS and LEPIDUS.

Lep. Good Enobarbus, 'tis a worthy deed,
 And shall become you well, to entreat your captain
 To soft and gentle speech.

Eno. I shall entreat him
 To answer like himself : if Cæsar move him,
 Let Antony look over Cæsar's head
 And speak as loud as Mars. By Jupiter,
 Were I the wearer of Antonius' beard,
 I would not shave 't to-day.

Lep. 'Tis not a time
 For private stomaching.

Eno. Every time
 Serves for the matter that is then born in 't. 10

Lep. But small to greater matters must give way.

Eno. Not if the small come first.

Lep. Your speech is passion :
 But, pray you, stir no embers up. Here comes
 The noble Antony.

45. *square*, quarrel. Cf. 1. 30, and *Much Ado*. i. 1.
Midsummer-Night's Dream, ii. 82.

Enter ANTONY and VENTIDIUS.

Eno. And yonder, Cæsar.

Enter CÆSAR, MECÆNAS, and AGRIPPA.

Ant. If we compose well here, to Parthia :
Hark, Ventidius.

Cæs. I do not know,
Mecænas ; ask Agrippa.

Lep. Noble friends,
That which combined us was most great, and let
not

A leaner action rend us. What's amiss,
May it be gently heard : when we debate
Our trivial difference loud, we do commit
Murder in healing wounds : then, noble partners,
The rather, for I earnestly beseech,
Touch you the sourest points with sweetest terms,
Nor curstness grow to the matter.

20

Ant. 'Tis spoken well.
Were we before our armies and to fight,
I should do thus.

[*Flourish.*

Cæs. Welcome to Rome.

Ant. Thank you.

Cæs. Sit.

Ant. Sit, sir.

Cæs. Nay, then.

Ant. I learn, you take things ill which are not so,
Or being, concern you not.

Cæs. I must be laugh'd at, 30

If, or for nothing or a little, I
Should say myself offended, and with you
Chiefly i' the world ; more laugh'd at, that I should
Once name you derogately, when to sound your
name

15. *compose*, settle differences.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

It not concern'd me.

Ant.

My being in Egypt, Cæsar,

What was 't to you?

Cæs. No more than my residing here at Rome
Might be to you in Egypt: yet, if you there
Did practise on my state, your being in Egypt
Might be my question.

Ant.

How intend you, practised? 40

Cæs. You may be pleased to catch at mine
intent

By what did here befall me. Your wife and brother
Made wars upon me; and their contestation
Was theme for you, you were the word of war.

Ant. You do mistake your business; my brother
never

Did urge me in his act: I did inquire it;
And have my learning from some true reports,
That drew their swords with you. Did he not
rather

Discredit my authority with yours,
And make the wars alike against my stomach, 50
Having alike your cause? Of this my letters
Before did satisfy you. If you'll patch a quarrel,
As matter whole you have not to make it with,
It must not be with this.

Cæs.

You praise yourself

By laying defects of judgement to me; but
You patch'd up your excuses.

Ant.

Not so, not so;

I know you could not lack, I am certain on't,
Very necessity of this thought, that I,
Your partner in the cause 'gainst which he fought,

43. *contestation*, contention, stigator.
quarrel.

44. *Was theme for you*, had (with the aid of any flimsy pre-
text that happens to be avail-
able).

46. *urge*, allege as his in-

Could not with graceful eyes attend those wars 60
Which fronted mine own peace. As for my wife,
I would you had her spirit in such another :
The third o' the world is yours, which with a snaffle
You may pace easy, but not such a wife.

Eno. Would we had all such wives, that the
men might go to wars with the women !

Ant. So much uncurbable, her garboils. Cæsar,
Made out of her impatience, which not wanted
Shrewdness of policy too, I grieving grant
Did you too much disquiet : for that you must 70
But say, I could not help it.

Cæs. I wrote to you
When rioting in Alexandria ; you
Did pocket up my letters, and with taunts
Did gibe my missive out of audience.

Ant. Sir,
He fell upon me ere admitted : then
Three kings I had newly feasted, and did want
Of what I was i' the morning : but next day
I told him of myself, which was as much
As to have ask'd him pardon. Let this fellow
Be nothing of our strife ; if we contend, 80
Out of our question wipe him.

Cæs. You have broken
The article of your oath, which you shall never
Have tongue to charge me with.

Lep. Soft, Cæsar !

Ant. No,

Lepidus, let him speak :

The honour is sacred which he talks on now,
Supposing that I lack'd it. But, on, Cæsar ;
The article of my oath.

Cæs. To lend me arms and aid when I required
them :

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

The which you both denied.

Ant. Neglected, rather ;
And then when poison'd hours had bound me up 90
From mine own knowledge. As nearly as I may,
I'll play the penitent to you : but mine honesty
Shall not make poor my greatness, nor my power
Work without it. Truth is that Fulvia,
To have me out of Egypt, made wars here ;
For which myself, the ignorant motive, do
So far ask pardon as befits mine honour
To stoop in such a case.

Lep. 'Tis noble spoken.

Mec. If it might please you, to enforce no further
The griefs between ye : to forget them quite 100
Were to remember that the present need
Speaks to atone you.

Lep. Worthily spoken, Mecænas.

Eno. Or, if you borrow one another's love
for the instant, you may, when you hear no more
words of Pompey, return it again : you shall
have time to wrangle in when you have nothing
else to do.

Ant. Thou art a soldier only : speak no more.

Eno. That truth should be silent I had almost
forgot. 110

Ant. You wrong this presence ; therefore speak
no more.

Eno. Go to, then ; your considerate stone.

Cæs. I do not much dislike the matter, but
The manner of his speech ; for 't cannot be
We shall remain in friendship, our conditions
So differing in their acts. Yet, if I knew
What hoop should hold us stanch, from edge to
edge

O' the world I would pursue it.

Agr. Give me leave, Cæsar,—

Cæs. Speak, Agrippa.

Agr. Thou hast a sister by the mother's side, 120
Admired Octavia : great Mark Antony
Is now a widower.

Cæs. Say not so, Agrippa :
If Cleopatra heard you, your reproof
Were well deserved of rashness.

Ant. I am not married, Cæsar : let me hear
Agrippa further speak.

Agr. To hold you in perpetual amity,
To make you brothers, and to knit your hearts
With an unslipping knot, take Antony
Octavia to his wife ; whose beauty claims 130
No worse a husband than the best of men,
Whose virtue and whose general graces speak
That which none else can utter. By this marriage,
All little jealousies, which now seem great,
And all great fears, which now import their dangers,
Would then be nothing : truths would be tales,
Where now half tales be truths : her love to both
Would, each to other and all loves to both,
Draw after her. Pardon what I have spoke,
For 'tis a studied, not a present thought, 140
By duty ruminated.

Ant. Will Cæsar speak ?

Cæs. Not till he hears how Antony is touch'd
With what is spoke already.

Ant. What power is in Agrippa,
If I would say, ' Agrippa, be it so,'
To make this good ?

Cæs. The power of Cæsar, and
His power unto Octavia.

Ant. May I never
To this good purpose, that so fairly shows,
Dream of impediment ! Let me have thy hand :
Further this act of grace : and from this hour

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

The heart of brothers govern in our loves
And sway our great designs !

150

Cæs. There is my hand
A sister I bequeath you, whom no brother
Did ever love so dearly : let her live
To join our kingdoms and our hearts ; and never
Fly off our loves again !

Lep. Happily, amen !

Ant. I did not think to draw my sword 'gainst
Pompey ;
For he hath laid strange courtesies and great
Of late upon me : I must thank him only,
Lest my remembrance suffer ill report ;
At heel of that, defy him.

Lep. Time calls upon 's :
Of us must Pompey presently be sought,
Or else he seeks out us.

160

Ant. Where lies he ?

Cæs. About the mount Misenum.

Ant. What 's his strength by land ?

Cæs. Great and increasing : but by sea
He is an absolute master.

Ant. So is the fame.
Would we had spoke together ! Haste we for it :
Yet, ere we put ourselves in arms, dispatch we
The business we have talk'd of.

Cæs. With most gladness ;
And do invite you to my sister's view,
Whither straight I 'll lead you.

170

Ant. Let us, Lepidus,
Not lack your company.

Lep. Noble Antony,
Not sickness should detain me.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt Cæsar, Antony,*
and Lepidus.

Mec. Welcome from Egypt, sir.

Eno. Half the heart of Cæsar, worthy Mecænas!
My honourable friend, Agrippa!

Agr. Good Enobarbus!

Mec. We have cause to be glad that matters
are so well digested. You stayed well by't in
Egypt.

180

Eno. Ay, sir; we did sleep day out of counte-
nance, and made the night light with drinking.

Mec. Eight wild-boars roasted whole at a
breakfast, and but twelve persons there; is this
true?

Eno. This was but as a fly by an eagle: we
had much more monstrous matter of feast, which
worthily deserved noting.

Mec. She's a most triumphant lady, if report
be square to her.

190

Eno. When she first met Mark Antony, she
pursued up his heart, upon the river of Cydnus.

Agr. There she appeared indeed, or my re-
porter devised well for her.

Eno. I will tell you.

The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
Burn'd on the water: the poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars
were silver,

Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made 200
The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
It beggar'd all description: she did lie
In her pavilion—cloth-of-gold of tissue—
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature: on each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With divers-colour'd fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

And what they undid did.

Agr. O, rare for Antony ! 210

Eno. Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,
So many mermaids, tended her i' the eyes,
And made their bends adornings : at the helm
A seeming mermaid steers : the silken tackle
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,
That yarely frame the office. From the barge
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
Her people out upon her ; and Antony,
Enthroned i' the market-place, did sit alone, 220
Whistling to the air ; which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too
And made a gap in nature.

Agr. Rare Egyptian !

Eno. Upon her landing, Antony sent to her,
Invited her to supper : she replied,
It should be better he became her guest ;
Which she entreated : our courteous Antony,
Whom ne'er the word of ' No ' woman heard speak,
Being barber'd ten times o'er, goes to the feast,
And for his ordinary, pays his heart 230
For what his eyes eat only.

Agr. Royal wench !

She made great Cæsar lay his sword to bed :
He plough'd her, and she cropp'd.

Eno. I saw her once

Hop forty paces through the public street ;
And having lost her breath, she spoke, and panted,

211. *Nereides*, the nymphs
of the sea who attended upon
Neptune.

213. *made their bends adorn-
ings*, made the glances of their
eyes, as they gazed on her, a
means of added grace.

214. *tackle*, treated as a plural
noun in the First Folio.

216. *yarely*, readily, handily.

230. *ordinary*, the public
dinner at Elizabethan eating-
houses.

That she did make defect perfection,
And, breathless, power breathe forth.

Mec. Now Antony must leave her utterly.

Eno. Never ; he will not :

Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety : other women cloy
The appetites they feed : but she makes hungry
Where most she satisfies : for vilest things
Become themselves in her ; that the holy priests
Bless her when she is riggish.

240

Mec. If beauty, wisdom, modesty, can settle
The heart of Antony, Octavia is
A blessed lottery to him.

Agr. Let us go.

Good Enobarbus, make yourself my guest
Whilst you abide here.

Eno. Humbly, sir, I thank you. [*Exeunt.* 250

SCENE III. *The same. Cæsar's house.*

Enter ANTONY, CÆSAR, OCTAVIA *between them,*
and Attendants.

Ant. The world and my great office will some-
times

Divide me from your bosom.

Octa. All which time

Before the gods my knee shall bow my prayers
To them for you.

Ant. Good night, sir. My Octavia,
Read not my blemishes in the world's report :
I have not kept my square ; but that to come
Shall all be done by the rule. Good night, dear
lady.

Good night, sir.

245. *riggish*, wanton.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

Cæs. Good night.

[*Exeunt Cæsar and Octavia.*

Enter Soothsayer.

Ant. Now, sirrah ; you do wish yourself in Egypt ?

10

Sooth. Would I had never come from thence,
nor you
Thither !

Ant. If you can, your reason ?

Sooth. I see it in
My motion, have it not in my tongue : but yet
Hie you to Egypt again.

Ant. Say to me,
Whose fortunes shall rise higher, Cæsar's or mine ?

Sooth. Cæsar's.
Therefore, O Antony, stay not by his side :
Thy demon, that's thy spirit which keeps thee, is
Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable,
Where Cæsar's is not ; but, near him, thy angel
Becomes a fear, as being o'erpower'd : therefore
Make space enough between you.

20

Ant. Speak this no more.

Sooth. To none but thee ; no more, but when
to thee.

If thou dost play with him at any game,
Thou art sure to lose ; and, of that natural luck,
He beats thee 'gainst the odds : thy lustre thickens,
When he shines by : I say again, thy spirit
Is all afraid to govern thee near him ;
But, he away, 'tis noble.

Ant. Get thee gone :
Say to Ventidius I would speak with him :

30

[*Exit Soothsayer.*

14. *motion*, power of perception, understanding.

24. *when*, elliptical for the phrase 'at the time when I speak.'

He shall to Parthia. Be it art or hap,
 He hath spoken true : the very dice obey him ;
 And in our sports my better cunning faints
 Under his chance : if we draw lots, he speeds ;
 His cocks do win the battle still of mine,
 When it is all to nought ; and his quails ever
 Beat mine, inhoop'd, at odds. I will to Egypt :
 And though I make this marriage for my peace,
 I' the east my pleasure lies.

Enter VENTIDIUS.

O, come, Ventidius, 40
 You must to Parthia : your commission's ready ;
 Follow me, and receive't. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The same. A street.*

Enter LEPIDUS, MECÆNAS, and AGRIPPA.

Lep. Trouble yourselves no further : pray you,
 hasten

Your generals after.

Agr. Sir, Mark Antony
 Will e'en but kiss Octavia, and we'll follow.

Lep. Till I shall see you in your soldier's dress,
 Which will become you both, farewell.

Mec. We shall,
 As I conceive the journey, be at the Mount
 Before you, Lepidus.

Lep. Your way is shorter ;
 My purposes do draw me much about :
 You'll win two days upon me.

Mec. }
Agr. } Sir, good success !

Lep. Farewell. [*Exeunt.* 10

38. *inchoop'd*, enclosed in a hoop, so as to be compelled to fight.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

SCENE V. *Alexandria. Cleopatra's palace.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, *and*
ALEXAS.

Cleo. Give me some music ; music, moody food
Of us that trade in love.

Attend. The music, ho !

Enter MARDIAN *the Eunuch.*

Cleo. Let it alone ; let's to billiards : come,
Charmian.

Char. My arm is sore : best play with Mardian.

Cleo. As well a woman with an eunuch play'd
As with a woman. Come, you'll play with me,
sir ?

Mar. As well as I can, madam.

Cleo. And when good will is show'd, though't
come too short,
The actor may plead pardon. I'll none now :
Give me mine angle ; we'll to the river : there, 10
My music playing far off, I will betray
Tawny-finn'd fishes ; my bended hook shall pierce
Their slimy jaws ; and, as I draw them up,
I'll think them every one an Antony,
And say ' Ah, ha ! you're caught.'

Char. 'Twas merry when
You wager'd on your angling ; when your diver
Did hang a salt-fish on his hook, which he
With fervency drew up.

Cleo. That time,—O times !—
I laugh'd him out of patience ; and that night
I laugh'd him into patience : and next morn, 20
Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed ;

Antony and Cleopatra

Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst
I wore his sword Philippan.

Enter a Messenger.

O, from Italy!

Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in mine ears,
That long time have been barren.

Mess.

Madam, madam,—

Cleo. Antonius dead! If thou say so, villain,
Thou kill'st thy mistress: but well and free,
If thou so yield him, there is gold, and here
My bluest veins to kiss; a hand that kings
Have lipp'd, and trembled kissing.

39

Mess. First, madam, he is well.

Cleo.

Why, there's more gold.

But, sirrah, mark, we use
To say the dead are well: bring it to that,
The gold I give thee will I melt and pour
Down thy ill-uttering throat.

Mess. Good madam, hear me.

Cleo.

Well, go to, I will;

But there's no goodness in thy face: if Antony
Be free and healthful,—so tart a favour
To trumpet such good tidings! If not well,
Thou shouldst come like a Fury crown'd with
snakes,

40

Not like a formal man.

Mess.

Will't please you hear me?

Cleo. I have a mind to strike thee ere thou
speak'st:

Yet, if thou say Antony lives, is well,
Or friends with Cæsar, or not captive to him,
I'll set thee in a shower of gold, and hail

23. sword Philippan, the he and Octavius overthrew
sword which Antony had used Brutus and Cassius.
at the battle of Philippi when 41. formal, ordinary.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

Rich pearls upon thee.

Mess. Madam, he's well.

Cleo. Well said.

Mess. And friends with Cæsar.

Cleo. Thou'rt an honest man.

Mess. Cæsar and he are greater friends than ever.

Cleo. Make thee a fortune from me.

Mess. But yet, madam,—

Cleo. I do not like 'But yet,' it does allay 50
The good precedence ; fie upon 'But yet' !

'But yet' is as a gaoler to bring forth
Some monstrous malefactor. Prithee, friend,
Pour out the pack of matter to mine ear,
The good and bad together : he's friends with
Cæsar,

In state of health thou say'st, and thou say'st free.

Mess. Free, madam ! no ; I made no such
report :

He's bound unto Octavia.

Cleo. For what good turn ?

Mess. For the best turn i' the bed.

Cleo. I am pale, Charmian.

Mess. Madam, he's married to Octavia. 60

Cleo. The most infectious pestilence upon thee !
[*Strikes him down.*

Mess. Good madam, patience.

Cleo. What say you ? Hence,
[*Strikes him again.*

Horrible villain ! or I'll spurn thine eyes

Like balls before me ; I'll unhair thy head :

[*She hales him up and down.*

Thou shalt be whipp'd with wire, and stew'd in
brine,

Smarting in lingering pickle.

Mess. Gracious madam,

I that do bring the news made not the match.

Cleo. Say 'tis not so, a province I will give thee
And make thy fortunes proud : the blow thou hadst
Shall make thy peace for moving me to rage ; 70
And I will boot thee with what gift beside
Thy modesty can beg.

Mess. He 's married, madam.

Cleo. Rogue, thou hast lived too long.

[*Draws a knife.*

Mess. Nay, then I 'll run.

What mean you, madam ? I have made no fault.

[*Exit.*

Char. Good madam, keep yourself within yourself :

The man is innocent.

Cleo. Some innocents 'scape not the thunderbolt.

Melt Egypt into Nile ! and kindly creatures

Turn all to serpents ! Call the slave again :

Though I am mad, I will not bite him : call 80

Char. He is afraid to come.

Cleo. I will not hurt him.

[*Exit Charmian.*

These hands do lack nobility, that they strike

A meaner than myself ; since I myself

Have given myself the cause.

Re-enter CHARMIAN and Messenger.

Come hither, sir.

Though it be honest, it is never good

To bring bad news : give to a gracious message

An host of tongues ; but let ill tidings tell

Themselves when they be felt.

Mess. I have done my duty.

Cleo. Is he married ?

I cannot hate thee worser than I do, 90

If thou again say ' Yes.'

71. *boot*, give over and above.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

Mess. He's married, madam.

Cleo. The gods confound thee! dost thou hold there still?

Mess. Should I lie, madam?

Cleo. O, I would thou didst,
So half my Egypt were submerged and made
A cistern for scaled snakes! Go, get thee hence:
Hadst thou Narcissus in thy face, to me
Thou wouldst appear most ugly. He is married?

Mess. I crave your highness' pardon.

Cleo. He is married?

Mess. Take no offence that I would not offend
you:

To punish me for what you make me do 100
Seems much unequal: he's married to Octavia.

Cleo. O, that his fault should make a knave of
thee,

That art not what thou'rt sure of! Get thee hence:
The merchandise which thou hast brought from
Rome

Are all too dear for me: lie they upon thy hand,
And be undone by 'em! [*Exit Messenger.*]

Char. Good your highness, patience.

Cleo. In praising Antony, I have dispraised
Cæsar.

Char. Many times, madam.

Cleo. I am paid for 't now.

Lead me from hence;
I faint: O Iras, Charmian! 'tis no matter. 110
Go to the fellow, good Alexas; bid him
Report the feature of Octavia, her years,

96. *Narcissus* was a beautiful flower which is still called after youth of Bœotia, who killed himself from vexation at his inability to approach his own reflection in a fountain. His blood was changed into the
103. *That art not what thou'rt sure of;* (with irony) that art innocent, forsooth, of offence, yet sure to offend!

Her inclination ; let him not leave out
The colour of her hair : bring me word quickly.

[*Exit Alexas.*

Let him for ever go : let him not—Charmian,
Though he be painted one way like a Gorgon,
The other way 's a Mars. Bid you Alexas

[*To Mardian.*

Bring me word how tall she is. Pity me, Charmian,
But do not speak to me. Lead me to my chamber.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Near Misenum.*

Flourish. Enter POMPEY and MENAS at one side,
with drum and trumpet : at another, CÆSAR,
ANTONY, LEPIDUS, ENOBARBUS, MECÆNAS,
with Soldiers marching.

Pom. Your hostages I have, so have you mine ;
And we shall talk before we fight.

Cæs.

Most meet

That first we come to words ; and therefore have we
Our written purposes before us sent ;
Which, if thou hast consider'd, let us know
If 'twill tie up thy discontented sword
And carry back to Sicily much tall youth
That else must perish here.

Pom.

To you all three,

The senators alone of this great world,
Chief factors for the gods, I do not know
Wherefore my father should revengers want,
Having a son and friends ; since Julius Cæsar,
Who at Philippi the good Brutus ghosted,

10

116. *Though he be painted, etc.* which represented different
The reference is probably to the things when seen from different
so-called 'Perspective' pictures, points of view.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

There saw you labouring for him. What was 't
That moved pale Cassius to conspire, and what
Made the all-honour'd, honest Roman, Brutus,
With the arm'd rest, courtiers of beauteous freedom,
To drench the Capitol, but that they would
Have one man but a man? And that is it
Hath made me rig my navy, at whose burthen 20
The anger'd ocean foams ; with which I meant
To scourge the ingratitude that despiteful Rome
Cast on my noble father.

Cæs. Take your time.

Ant. Thou canst not fear us, Pompey, with thy
sails ;
We 'll speak with thee at sea : at land, thou know'st
How much we do o'er-count thee.

Pom. At land, indeed,
Thou dost o'er-count me of my father's house :
But since the cuckoo builds not for himself,
Remain in 't as thou mayst.

Lep. Be pleased to tell us—
For this is from the present—how you take 30
The offers we have sent you.

Cæs. There 's the point.

Ant. Which do not be entreated to, but weigh
What it is worth embraced.

Cæs. And what may follow,
To try a larger fortune.

Pom. You have made me offer
Of Sicily, Sardinia ; and I must
Rid all the sea of pirates ; then, to send
Measures of wheat to Rome ; this 'greed upon,
To part with unhack'd edges, and bear back
Our targes undinted.

Cæs. Ant. Lep. That 's our offer.

27-29. The house of the possession.
elder Pompey was in Antony's 39. targes, shields.

Pom.

Know, then, 40

I came before you here a man prepared
 To take this offer : but Mark Antony
 Put me to some impatience : though I lose
 The praise of it by telling, you must know,
 When Cæsar and your brother were at blows,
 Your mother came to Sicily and did find
 Her welcome friendly.

Ant.

I have heard it, Pompey,
 And am well studied for a liberal thanks
 Which I do owe you.

Pom.

Let me have your hand :
 I did not think, sir, to have met you here. 50

Ant. The beds i' the east are soft ; and thanks
 to you,

That call'd me timelier than my purpose hither ;
 For I have gain'd by't.

Cæs.

Since I saw you last,
 There is a change upon you.

Pom.

Well, I know not
 What counts harsh fortune casts upon my face ;
 But in my bosom shall she never come,
 To make my heart her vassal.

Lep.

Well met here.

Pom. I hope so, Lepidus. Thus we are agreed :

I crave our composition may be written
 And seal'd between us.

Cæs.

That's the next to do. 60

Pom. We'll feast each other ere we part, and let's

Draw lots who shall begin.

Ant.

That will I, Pompey.

Pom. No, Antony, take the lot : but, first

Or last, your fine Egyptian cookery
 Shall have the fame. I have heard that Julius Cæsar
 Grew fat with feasting there.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

Ant. You have heard much.

Pom. I have fair meanings, sir.

Ant. And fair words to them.

Pom. Then so much have I heard :

And I have heard, Apollodorus carried—

Eno. No more of that : he did so.

Pom. What, I pray you? 70

Eno. A certain queen to Cæsar in a mattress.

Pom. I know thee now : how farest thou, soldier?

Eno. Well ;

And well am like to do, for, I perceive,

Four feasts are toward.

Pom. Let me shake thy hand ;

I never hated thee : I have seen thee fight,

When I have envied thy behaviour.

Eno. Sir,

I never loved you much, but I ha' praised ye,

When you have well deserved ten times as much

As I have said you did.

Pom. Enjoy thy plainness, 80

It nothing ill becomes thee.

Aboard my galley I invite you all :

Will you lead, lords?

Cæs. Ant. Lep. Show us the way, sir.

Pom. Come.

[*Exeunt all but Menas and Enobarbus.*]

Menas. [*Aside*] Thy father, Pompey, would ne'er have made this treaty.—You and I have known, sir.

Eno. At sea, I think.

Menas. We have, sir.

Eno. You have done well by water.

Menas. And you by land. 90

Eno. I will praise any man that will praise me ; though it cannot be denied what I have done by land.

Men. Nor what I have done by water.

Eno. Yes, something you can deny for your own safety : you have been a great thief by sea.

Men. And you by land.

Eno. There I deny my land service. But give me your hand, Menas : if our eyes had authority, here they might take two thieves ¹⁰⁰ kissing.

Men. All men's faces are true, whosome'er their hands are.

Eno. But there is never a fair woman has a true face.

Men. No slander ; they steal hearts.

Eno. We came hither to fight with you.

Men. For my part, I am sorry it is turned to a drinking. Pompey doth this day laugh away his fortune. 110

Eno. If he do, sure, he cannot weep't back again.

Men. You've said, sir. We looked not for Mark Antony here : pray you, is he married to Cleopatra ?

Eno. Cæsar's sister is called Octavia.

Men. True, sir ; she was the wife of Caius Marcellus.

Eno. But she is now the wife of Marcus Antonius.

Men. Pray ye, sir ? 120

Eno. 'Tis true.

Men. Then is Cæsar and he for ever knit together.

Eno. If I were bound to divine of this unity, I would not prophesy so.

Men. I think the policy of that purpose made more in the marriage than the love of the parties.

Eno. I think so too. But you shall find, the band that seems to tie their friendship together

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

will be the very strangler of their amity : Octavia ¹³⁰
is of a holy, cold, and still conversation.

Men. Who would not have his wife so ?

Eno. Not he that himself is not so ; which is Mark Antony. He will to his Egyptian dish again : then shall the sighs of Octavia blow the fire up in Cæsar ; and, as I said before, that which is the strength of their amity shall prove the immediate author of their variance. Antony will use his affection where it is : he married but his occasion here.

¹⁴⁰

Men. And thus it may be. Come, sir, will you aboard ? I have a health for you.

Eno. I shall take it, sir : we have used our throats in Egypt.

Men. Come, let's away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *On board Pompey's galley, off Misenum.*

Music plays. Enter two or three Servants with a banquet.

First Serv. Here they'll be, man. Some o' tneir plants are ill-rooted already ; the least wind i' the world will blow them down.

Sec. Serv. Lepidus is high-coloured.

First Serv. They have made him drink alms-drink.

Sec. Serv. As they pinch one another by the disposition, he cries out 'No more ;' reconciles them to his entreaty, and himself to the drink.

^{140.} occasion, convenience.

^{7.} pinch one another by the disposition, banteringly twit one another.

^{5.} alms-drink, leavings.

Antony and Cleopatra

First Serv. But it raises the greater war between him and his discretion. 10

Sec. Serv. Why, this it is to have a name in great men's fellowship: I had as lief have a reed that will do me no service as a partisan I could not heave.

First Serv. To be called into a huge sphere, and not to be seen to move in't, are the holes where eyes should be, which pitifully disaster the cheeks.

A sennet sounded. Enter CÆSAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, POMPEY, AGRIPPA, MECÆNAS, ENO-BARBUS, MENAS, with other captains.

Ant. [To Cæsar] Thus do they, sir: they take the flow o' the Nile 20

By certain scales i' the pyramid; they know,
By the height, the lowness, or the mean, if dearth
Or foison follow: the higher Nilus swells,
The more it promises: as it ebbs, the seedsman
Upon the slime and ooze scatters his grain,
And shortly comes to harvest.

Lep. You've strange serpents there.

Ant. Ay, Lepidus.

Lep. Your serpent of Egypt is bred now of your mud by the operation of your sun: so is your 30 crocodile.

Ant. They are so.

Pom. Sit,—and some wine! A health to Lepidus!

Lep. I am not so well as I should be, but I'll ne'er out.

Eno. Not till you have slept; I fear me you'll be in till then.

Lep. Nay, certainly, I have heard the Ptolemies'

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

pyramises are very goodly things ; without contra- 40
diction, I have heard that.

Men. [*Aside to Pom.*] Pompey, a word.

Pom. [*Aside to Men.*] Say in mine
ear : what is 't ?

Men. [*Aside to Pom.*] Forsake thy seat, I do
beseech thee, captain,

And hear me speak a word.

Pom. [*Aside to Men.*] Forbear me till anon.
This wine for Lepidus !

Lep. What manner o' thing is your crocodile ?

Ant. It is shaped, sir, like itself ; and it is as
broad as it hath breadth : it is just so high as it
is, and moves with it own organs : it lives by
that which nourisheth it ; and the elements once 50
out of it, it transmigrates.

Lep. What colour is it of ?

Ant. Of it own colour too.

Lep. 'Tis a strange serpent.

Ant. 'Tis so. And the tears of it are wet.

Cæs. Will this description satisfy him ?

Ant. With the health that Pompey gives him,
else he is a very epicure.

Pom. [*Aside to Men.*] Go hang, sir, hang !

Tell me of that ? away !

Do as I bid you.—Where 's this cup I call'd for ? 60

Men. [*Aside to Pom.*] If for the sake of merit
thou wilt hear me,

Rise from thy stool.

Pom. [*Aside to Men.*] I think thou'rt mad.

The matter ? [*Rises, and walks aside.*

Men. I have ever held my cap off to thy for-
tunes.

Pom. Thou hast served me with much faith.

What 's else to say ?

Be jolly, lords.

Ant. These quick-sands, Lepidus,
Keep off them, for you sink.

Men. Wilt thou be lord of all the world?

Pom. What say'st thou?

Men. Wilt thou be lord of the whole world?

That's twice.

Pom. How should that be?

Men. But entertain it,
And, though thou think me poor, I am the man 70
Will give thee all the world.

Pom. Hast thou drunk well?

Men. No, Pompey, I have kept me from the
cup.

Thou art, if thou darest be, the earthly Jove :
Whate'er the ocean pales, or sky inclips,
Is thine, if thou wilt ha't.

Pom. Show me which way.

Men. These three world-sharers, these com-
petitors,

Are in thy vessel : let me cut the cable ;
And, when we are put off, fall to their throats :
All there is thine.

Pom. Ah, this thou shouldst have done,
And not have spoke on't ! In me 'tis villany ; 80
In thee 't had been good service. Thou must know,
'Tis not my profit that does lead mine honour ;
Mine honour, it. Repent that e'er thy tongue
Hath so betray'd thine act : being done unknown
I should have found it afterwards well done ;
But must condemn it now. Desist, and drink.

Men. [*Aside*] For this,
I'll never follow thy pall'd fortunes more.
Who seeks, and will not take when once 'tis offer'd,
Shall never find it more.

Pom. This health to Lepidus ! 90

74 *pales*, encloses as with a fence.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT II

Ant. Bear him ashore. I'll pledge it for him,
Pompey.

Eno. Here's to thee, Menas!

Men. Enobarbus, welcome!

Pom. Fill till the cup be hid.

Eno. There's a strong fellow, Menas.

[*Pointing to the Attendant who carries
off Lepidus.*]

Men. Why?

Eno. A' bears the third part of the world, man;
see'st not?

Men. The third part, then, is drunk: would it
were all,

That it might go on wheels!

Eno. Drink thou; increase the reels. 100

Men. Come.

Pom. This is not yet an Alexandrian feast.

Ant. It ripens towards it. Strike the vessels, ho!
Here is to Cæsar!

Cæs. I could well forbear 't.
It's monstrous labour, when I wash my brain,
And it grows fouler.

Ant. Be a child o' the time.

Cæs. Possess it, I'll make answer:
But I had rather fast from all four days
Than drink so much in one.

Eno. Ha, my brave emperor! [*To Antony.*]
Shall we dance now the Egyptian Bacchanals, 110
And celebrate our drink?

Pom. Let's ha't, good soldier.

Ant. Come, let's all take hands,
Till that the conquering wine hath steep'd our sense
In soft and delicate Lethe.

100. *increase the reels*; perhaps, as Douce suggests, 'increase the revels.' But it is more natural to connect it with Enobarbus' direct proposal for a dance in his next speech (v. 110).

Eno. All take hands.
 Make battery to our ears with the loud music :
 The while I'll place you : then the boy shall sing ;
 The holding every man shall bear as loud
 As his strong sides can volley.

[*Music plays. Enobarbus places them
 hand in hand.*]

THE SONG.

Come, thou monarch of the vine, 120
 Plumpy Bacchus with pink eyne !
 In thy fats our cares be drown'd,
 With thy grapes our hairs be crown'd :
 Cup us, till the world go round,
 Cup us, till the world go round !

Cæs. What would you more ? Pompey, good
 night. Good brother,
 Let me request you off : our graver business
 Frowns at this levity. Gentle lords, let's part ;
 You see we have burnt our cheeks : strong Enobarb
 Is weaker than the wine ; and mine own tongue 130
 Splits what it speaks : the wild disguise hath almost
 Antick'd us all. What needs more words ? Good
 night.

Good Antony, your hand.

Pom. I'll try you on the shore.

Ant. And shall, sir : give's your hand.

Pom. O Antony,

You have my father's house,—But, what ? we are
 friends.

Come, down into the boat.

118. *holding*, burden.

connexion of the hops and

122. *fats*, vats. The latter
 word is a southern dialectal form
 which has extruded the former,
 probably owing to the long

brewing industry with Kent.

132. *Antick'd us*, made us
 buffoons.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

Eno. Take heed you fall not.

[*Exeunt all but Enobarbus and Menas.*

Menas, I'll not on shore.

Men. No, to my cabin.

These drums! these trumpets, flutes! what!

Let Neptune hear we bid a loud farewell

To these great fellows: sound and be hang'd,
sound out! [*Sound a flourish, with drums.* 142

Eno. Hoo! says a'. There's my cap.

Men. Hoo! Noble captain, come. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A plain in Syria.*

Enter VENTIDIUS as it were in triumph, with SILIUS, and other Romans, Officers, and Soldiers; the dead body of PACORUS borne before him.

Ven. Now, darting Parthia, art thou struck; and
now

Pleased fortune does of Marcus Crassus' death
Make me revenger. Bear the king's son's body
Before our army. Thy Pacorus, Orodes,
Pays this for Marcus Crassus.

Sil. Noble Ventidius,

Whilst yet with Parthian blood thy sword is warm,
The fugitive Parthians follow; spur through Media,

4. *Orodes*, the king of Parthia,
Pacorus' father.

5. *Marcus Crassus*. Crassus,
with Pompey and Cæsar, had
formed the First Triumvirate.

He ruled the province of Syria.
He had been routed, taken
prisoner, and put to death by
the forces of Orodes, the Parthian
king.

Antony and Cleopatra

Mesopotamia, and the shelters whither
 The routed fly : so thy grand captain Antony
 Shall set thee on triumphant chariots and
 Put garlands on thy head.

10

Ven. O Silius, Silius,
 I have done enough ; a lower place, note well,
 May make too great an act : for learn this, Silius ;
 Better to leave undone, than by our deed
 Acquire too high a fame when him we serve 's away.
 Cæsar and Antony have ever won
 More in their officer than person : Sossius,
 One of my place in Syria, his lieutenant,
 For quick accumulation of renown,
 Which he achieved by the minute, lost his favour. 20
 Who does i' the wars more than his captain can
 Becomes his captain's captain : and ambition,
 The soldier's virtue, rather makes choice of loss,
 Than gain which darkens him.
 I could do more to do Antonius good,
 But 'twould offend him ; and in his offence
 Should my performance perish.

Sil. Thou hast, Ventidius, that
 Without the which a soldier, and his sword,
 Grants scarce distinction. Thou wilt write to
 Antony ?

Ven. I'll humbly signify what in his name, 30
 That magical word of war, we have effected ;
 How, with his banners and his well-paid ranks,
 The ne'er-yet-beaten horse of Parthia
 We have jaded out o' the field.

Sil. Where is he now ?

Ven. He purposeth to Athens : whither, with
 what haste
 The weight we must convey with 's will permit,
 We shall appear before him. On, there ; pass
 along ! [Exeunt.

SCENE II. *Rome. An ante-chamber in Cæsar's house.*

Enter AGRIPPA *at one door*, ENOBARBUS
at another.

Agr. What, are the brothers parted?

Eno. They have dispatch'd with Pompey, he is gone;

The other three are sealing. Octavia weeps
To part from Rome; Cæsar is sad; and Lepidus,
Since Pompey's feast, as Menas says, is troubled
With the green sickness.

Agr. 'Tis a noble Lepidus.

Eno. A very fine one: O, how he loves Cæsar!

Agr. Nay, but how dearly he adores Mark
Antony!

Eno. Cæsar? Why, he's the Jupiter of men.

Agr. What's Antony? The god of Jupiter. 10

Eno. Spake you of Cæsar? How! the non-
pareil!

Agr. O Antony! O thou Arabian bird!

Eno. Would you praise Cæsar, say 'Cæsar:' go
no further.

Agr. Indeed, he plied them both with excellent
praises.

Eno. But he loves Cæsar best; yet he loves
Antony:

Ho! hearts, tongues, figures, scribes, bards, poets,
cannot

6. *green sickness*, a disease indicated by a green, livid appearance, and incident to maidens in love. Lepidus, it is insinuated, is languishing for love of Cæsar and Antony. L.
12. *Arabian bird*, the Phoenix.
16, 17. *hearts, tongues*, etc.; a parody of the so-called 'reporting sonnet.' L.

Think, speak, cast, write, sing, number, ho !
 His love to Antony. But as for Cæsar,
 Kneel down, kneel down, and wonder.

Agr. Both he loves.

Eno. They are his shards, and he their beetle.

[*Trumpets within.*] So ;

This is to horse. Adieu, noble Agrippa.

Agr. Good fortune, worthy soldier, and farewell.

Enter CÆSAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, and OCTAVIA.

Ant. No further, sir.

Cæs. You take from me a great part of myself ;
 Use me well in 't. Sister, prove such a wife
 As my thoughts make thee, and as my farthest
 band

Shall pass on thy approval. Most noble Antony,
 Let not the piece of virtue, which is set
 Betwixt us as the cément of our love,
 To keep it builded, be the ram to batter
 The fortress of it ; for better might we
 Have loved without this mean, if on both parts
 This be not cherish'd.

Ant. Make me not offended

In your distrust.

Cæs. I have said.

Ant. You shall not find,

Though you be therein curious, the least cause
 For what you seem to fear : so, the gods keep you,
 And make the hearts of Romans serve your ends !
 We will here part.

Cæs. Farewell, my dearest sister, fare thee well :
 The elements be kind to thee, and make

20. *shards*, the scaly wing-cases of the beetle.

26. *band*, bond, guarantee.

28. *piece*, paragon.

32. *mean*, medium, mediator.

35. *Though you be therein curious*, however closely you may scrutinise my conduct.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

Thy spirits all of comfort ! fare thee well.

Oct. My noble brother !

Ant. The April 's in her eyes : it is love's spring,
And these the showers to bring it on. Be cheerful.

Oct. Sir, look well to my husband's house ;
and—

Cæs. What,

Octavia ?

Oct. I 'll tell you in your ear.

Ant. Her tongue will not obey her heart, nor can
Her heart inform her tongue,—the swan's down-
feather,

That stands upon the swell at full of tide,
And neither way inclines.

50

Eno. [*Aside to Agr.*] Will Cæsar weep ?

Agr. [*Aside to Eno.*] He has a cloud in 's face.

Eno. [*Aside to Agr.*] He were the worse for that,
were he a horse ;

So is he, being a man.

Agr. [*Aside to Eno.*] Why, Enobarbus,
When Antony found Julius Cæsar dead,
He cried almost to roaring ; and he wept
When at Philippi he found Brutus slain.

Eno. [*Aside to Agr.*] That year, indeed, he was
troubled with a rheum ;

What willingly he did confound he wail'd,
Believe 't, till I wept too.

Cæs. No, sweet Octavia,
You shall hear from me still ; the time shall not
Out-go my thinking on you.

60

Ant. Come, sir, come ;
I 'll wrestle with you in my strength of love :
Look, here I have you ; thus I let you go,
And give you to the gods.

Cæs. Adieu ; be happy !

58. *confound*, destroy.

Antony and Cleopatra

Lep. Let all the number of the stars give light
To thy fair way!

Cæs. Farewell, farewell! [*Kisses Octavia.*

Ant. Farewell!

[*Trumpets sound. Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Alexandria. Cleopatra's palace.*

*Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and
ALEXAS.*

Cleo. Where is the fellow?

Alex. Half afeard to come.

Cleo. Go to, go to.

Enter the Messenger as before.

Come hither, sir.

Alex. Good majesty,

Herod of Jewry dare not look upon you

But when you are well pleased.

Cleo. That Herod's head

I'll have: but how, when Antony is gone

Through whom I might command it? Come
thou near.

Mess. Most gracious majesty,—

Cleo. Didst thou behold Octavia?

Mess. Ay, dread queen.

Cleo. Where?

Mess. Madam, in Rome;

I look'd her in the face, and saw her led

Between her brother and Mark Antony.

Cleo. Is she as tall as me?

Mess. She is not, madam.

Cleo. Didst hear her speak? is she shrill-tongued
or low?

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

Mess. Madam, I heard her speak ; she is low-voiced.

Cleo. That's not so good. He cannot like her long.

Char. Like her ! O Isis ! 'tis impossible.

Cleo. I think so, Charmian : dull of tongue, and dwarfish !

What majesty is in her gait ? Remember,
If e'er thou look'dst on majesty.

29

Mess. She creeps :

Her motion and her station are as one ;
She shows a body rather than a life,
A statue than a breather.

Cleo. Is this certain ?

Mess. Or I have no observance.

Char. Three in Egypt

Cannot make better note.

Cleo. He's very knowing ;

I do perceive't : there's nothing in her yet :
The fellow has good judgement.

Char. Excellent.

Cleo. Guess at her years, I prithee.

Mess. Madam,

She was a widow,—

Cleo. Widow ! Charmian, hark

30

Mess. And I do think she's thirty.

Cleo. Bear'st thou her face in mind ? is't long
or round ?

Mess. Round even to faultiness.

Cleo. For the most part, too, they are foolish
that are so.

Her hair, what colour ?

Mess. Brown, madam : and her forehead
As low as she would wish it.

Cleo. There's gold for thee.

Thou must not take my former sharpness ill :

Antony and Cleopatra

I will employ thee back again ; I find thee
 Most fit for business : go make thee ready ; 40
 Our letters are prepared. [*Exit Messenger.*]

Char. A proper man.

Cleo. Indeed, he is so : I repent me much
 That so I harried him. Why, methinks, by him,
 This creature's no such thing.

Char. Nothing, madam.

Cleo. The man hath seen some majesty, and
 should know.

Char. Hath he seen majesty ? Isis else defend,
 And serving you so long !

Cleo. I have one thing more to ask him yet,
 good Charmian :
 But 'tis no matter ; thou shalt bring him to me
 Where I will write. All may be well enough. 50

Char. I warrant you, madam. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Athens. A room in Antony's house.*

Enter ANTONY and OCTAVIA.

Ant. Nay, nay, Octavia, not only that,—
 That were excusable, that, and thousands more
 Of semblable impórt, but he hath waged
 New wars 'gainst Pompey ; made his will, and
 read it
 To public ear :
 Spoke scantily of me : when perforce he could not
 But pay me terms of honour, cold and sickly
 He vented them ; most narrow measure lent me :
 When the best hint was given him, he not took 't,
 Or did it from his teeth.

46. *defend*, forbid.

9. *hint*, occasion.

10. *from his teeth*, merely
 with his lips, as a form.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

Oct.

O my good lord,

10

Believe not all ; or, if you must believe,
Stomach not all. A more unhappy lady,
If this division chance, ne'er stood between,
Praying for both parts :

The good gods will mock me presently,
When I shall pray, 'O, bless my lord and husband !'
Undo that prayer, by crying out as loud,
'O, bless my brother !' Husband win, win brother,
Prays, and destroys the prayer ; no midway
'Twixt these extremes at all.

Ant.

Gentle Octavia,

20

Let your best love draw to that point, which seeks
Best to preserve it : if I lose mine honour,
I lose myself : better I were not yours
Than yours so branchless. But, as you requested,
Yourself shall go between 's : the mean time, lady,
I'll raise the preparation of a war
Shall stain your brother : make your soonest haste ;
So your desires are yours.

Oct.

Thanks to my lord.

The Jove of power make me, most weak, most
weak,

Your reconciler ! Wars 'twixt you twain would be 30
As if the world should cleave, and that slain men
Should solder up the rift.

Ant.

When it appears to you where this begins,
Turn your displeasure that way ; for our faults
Can never be so equal, that your love
Can equally move with them. Provide your going ;
Choose your own company, and command what
cost

Your heart has mind to.

[*Exeunt.*

27. stain, eclipse.

SCENE V. *The same. Another room.*

Enter ENOBARBUS and EROS, meeting.

Eno. How now, friend Eros!

Eros. There's strange news come, sir.

Eno. What, man?

Eros. Cæsar and Lepidus have made wars upon Pompey.

Eno. This is old: what is the success?

Eros. Cæsar, having made use of him in the wars 'gainst Pompey, presently denied him rivalry; would not let him partake in the glory of the action: and not resting here, accuses him of letters he had formerly wrote to Pompey; upon his own appeal, seizes him: so the poor third is up, till death enlarge his confine.

Eno. Then, world, thou hast a pair of chaps, no more;

And throw between them all the food thou hast,
They'll grind the one the other. Where's Antony?

Eros. He's walking in the garden—thus; and spurns

The rush that lies before him; cries, 'Fool Lepidus!'
And threats the throat of that his officer
That murder'd Pompey.

Eno. Our great navy's rigg'd. 20

Eros. For Italy and Cæsar. More, Domitius;
My lord desires you presently: my news
I might have told hereafter.

Eno. 'Twill be naught:
But let it be. Bring me to Antony

Eros. Come, sir. [*Exeunt.*

14. *Then, world, thou hast,* thou hadst.
so Hammer for Ff 'Then would 14. *chaps, jaws.*

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

SCENE VI. *Rome. Cæsar's house.*

Enter CÆSAR, AGRIPPA, and MECÆNAS.

Cæs. Contemning Rome, he has done all this,
and more,

In Alexandria : here's the manner of't :
I' the market-place, on a tribunal silver'd,
Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold
Were publicly enthroned : at the feet sat
Cæsarion, whom they call my father's son,
And all the unlawful issue that their lust
Since then hath made between them. Unto her
He gave the stablishment of Egypt ; made her
Of lower Syria, Cyprus, Lydia,
Absolute queen.

10

Mec. This in the public eye ?

Cæs. I' the common show-place, where they
exercise.

His sons he there proclaim'd the kings of kings :
Great Media, Parthia, and Armenia,
He gave to Alexander ; to Ptolemy he assign'd
Syria, Cilicia, and Phœnicia : she
In the habiliments of the goddess Isis
That day appear'd ; and oft before gave audience,
As 'tis reported, so.

Mec. Let Rome be thus
Inform'd.

Agr. Who, queasy with his insolence
Already, will their good thoughts call from him.

20

Cæs. The people know it ; and have now re-
ceived
His accusations.

6. *my father's son*, i.e. the son of his adoptive father, Julius Cæsar, and Cleopatra.
20. *queasy with*, disgusted with.

Agr. Who does he accuse?

Cæs. Cæsar: and that, having in Sicily
Sextus Pompeius spoil'd, we had not rated him
His part o' the isle: then does he say, he lent me
Some shipping unrestored: lastly, he frets
That Lepidus of the triumvirate
Should be deposed; and, being, that we detain
All his revenue.

Agr. Sir, this should be answer'd. 30

Cæs. 'Tis done already, and the messenger gone.
I have told him, Lepidus was grown too cruel;
That he his high authority abused,
And did deserve his change: for what I have
conquer'd,
I grant him part; but then, in his Armenia,
And other of his conquer'd kingdoms, I
Demand the like.

Mec. He'll never yield to that.

Cæs. Nor must not then be yielded to in this.

Enter OCTAVIA with her train.

Oct. Hail, Cæsar, and my lord! hail, most dear
Cæsar!

Cæs. That ever I should call thee castaway! 40

Oct. You have not call'd me so, nor have you
cause.

Cæs. Why have you stol'n upon us thus? You
come not

Like Cæsar's sister: the wife of Antony
Should have an army for an usher, and
The neighs of horse to tell of her approach
Long ere she did appear; the trees by the way
Should have borne men; and expectation fainted,
Longing for what it had not; nay, the dust
Should have ascended to the roof of heaven,

23. *Who* for whom is idiomatic in Elizabethan English

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

Raised by your populous troops : but you are come 50
A market-maid to Rome ; and have prevented
The ostentation of our love, which, left unshown,
Is often left unloved : we should have met you
By sea and land ; supplying every stage
With an augmented greeting.

Oct. Good my lord,
To come thus was I not constrain'd, but did
On my free will. My lord, Mark Antony,
Hearing that you prepared for war, acquainted
My grieved ear withal ; whereon, I begg'd
His pardon for return.

Cæs. Which soon he granted, 60
Being an obstruct 'tween his lust and him.

Oct. Do not say so, my lord.

Cæs. I have eyes upon him,
And his affairs come to me on the wind.
Where is he now ?

Oct. My lord, in Athens.

Cæs. No, my most wronged sister ; Cleopatra
Hath nodded him to her. He hath given his
empire

Up to a whore ; who now are levying
The kings o' the earth for war : he hath assembled
Bocchus, the king of Libya ; Archelaus,
Of Cappadocia ; Philadelphos, king 70
Of Paphlagonia ; the Thracian king, Adallas ;
King Malchus of Arabia ; King of Pont ;
Herod of Jewry ; Mithridates, king
Of Comagene ; Polemon and Amyntas,
The kings of Mede and Lycaonia,
With a more larger list of sceptres.

Oct. Ay me, most wretched,
That have my heart parted betwixt two friends
That do afflict each other !

Cæs. Welcome hither :

Your letters did withhold our breaking forth,
 Till we perceived, both how you were wrong led, 80
 And we in negligent danger. Cheer your heart :
 Be you not troubled with the time, which drives
 O'er your content these strong necessities ;
 But let determined things to destiny
 Hold unbewail'd their way. Welcome to Rome ;
 Nothing more dear to me. You are abused
 Beyond the mark of thought : and the high gods,
 To do you justice, make them ministers
 Of us and those that love you. Best of comfort ;
 And ever welcome to us.

Agr. Welcome, lady. 90

Mec. Welcome, dear madam.

Each heart in Rome does love and pity you :
 Only the adulterous Antony, most large
 In his abominations, turns you off ;
 And gives his potent regiment to a trull,
 That noises it against us.

Oct. Is it so, sir ?

Cæs. Most certain. Sister, welcome : pray you,
 Be ever known to patience : my dear'st sister !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII. *Near Actium. Antony's camp.*

Enter CLEOPATRA and ENOBARBUS.

Cleo. I will be even with thee, doubt it not.

Eno. But why, why, why ?

Cleo. Thou hast forspoke my being in these
 wars,

And say'st it is not fit.

Eno. Well, is it, is it ?

86. *abused, misused.*

3. *forspoke, gainsaid.*

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

Cleo. If not denounced against us, why should
not we

Be there in person?

Eno. [*Aside*] Well, I could reply:
If we should serve with horse and mares together,
The horse were merely lost; the mares would bear
A soldier and his horse.

Cleo. What is 't you say? 10

Eno. Your presence needs must puzzle Antony;
Take from his heart, take from his brain, from 's
time,

What should not then be spared. He is already
Traduced for levity; and 'tis said in Rome
That Photinus an eunuch and your maids
Manage this war.

Cleo. Sink Rome, and their tongues rot
That speak against us! A charge we bear i' the
war,

And, as the president of my kingdom, will
Appear there for a man. Speak not against it;
I will not stay behind.

Eno. Nay, I have done. 20
Here comes the emperor.

Enter ANTONY *and* CANIDIUS.

Ant. Is it not strange, Canidius,
That from Tarentum and Brundisium
He could so quickly cut the Ionian sea,
And take in Toryne? You have heard on 't, sweet?

Cleo. Celerity is never more admired
Than by the negligent.

Ant. A good rebuke,
Which might have well become the best of men,
To taunt at slackness. Canidius, we
Will fight with him by sea.

5. *denounced*, declared, *i.e.* war. 25. *admired*, wondered at.

Cleo. By sea! what else?

Can. Why will my lord do so?

Ant. For that he dares us to't. 30

Eno. So hath my lord dared him to single fight.

Can. Ay, and to wage this battle at Pharsalia,
Where Cæsar fought with Pompey : but these offers,
Which serve not for his vantage, he shakes off ;
And so should you.

Eno. Your ships are not well mann'd ;
Your mariners are muleters, reapers, people
Ingross'd by swift impress ; in Cæsar's fleet
Are those that often have 'gainst Pompey fought :
Their ships are yare ; yours, heavy : no disgrace
Shall fall you for refusing him at sea, 40
Being prepared for land.

Ant. By sea, by sea.

Eno. Most worthy sir, you therein throw away
The absolute soldiership you have by land ;
Distract your army, which doth most consist
Of war-mark'd footmen ; leave unexecuted
Your own renowned knowledge ; quite forego
The way which promises assurance ; and
Give up yourself merely to chance and hazard,
From firm security.

Ant. I'll fight at sea.

Cleo. I have sixty sails, Cæsar none better. 50

Ant. Our overplus of shipping will we burn ;
And, with the rest full-mann'd, from the head of
Actium

Beat the approaching Cæsar. But if we fail,
We then can do't at land.

Enter a Messenger.

Thy business?

Mess. The news is true, my lord ; he is descried ;

39. *yare*, readily handled ; hence light.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

Cæsar has taken Toryne.

Ant. Can he be there in person? 'tis impossible ;

Strange that his power should be. Canidius,
Our nineteen legions thou shalt hold by land,
And our twelve thousand horse. We'll to our ship : 60
Away, my Thetis !

Enter a Soldier.

How now, worthy soldier !

Sold. O noble emperor, do not fight by sea ;
Trust not to rotten planks : do you misdoubt
This sword and these my wounds? Let the
Egyptians

And the Phœnicians go a-ducking : we
Have used to conquer, standing on the earth,
And fighting foot to foot.

Ant. Well, well ; away !

[*Exeunt Antony, Cleopatra, and Enobarbus.*]

Sold. By Hercules, I think I am i' the right.

Can. Soldier, thou art : but his whole action
grows

Not in the power on't : so our leader's led, 70
And we are women's men.

Sold. You keep by land
The legions and the horse whole, do you not ?

Can. Marcus Octavius, Marcus Justeius,
Publicola, and Cælius, are for sea :
But we keep whole by land. This speed of Cæsar's
Carries beyond belief.

Sold. While he was yet in Rome,
His power went out in such distractions as
Beguiled all spies.

69. *his whole action grows,* strength.
etc. ; his plans have been formed
without regard to his military

77. *distractions, detach-*
ments.

Antony and Cleopatra

Can. Who's his lieutenant, hear you?

Sold. They say, one Taurus.

Can. Well I know the man.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. The emperor calls Canidius.

2c

Can. With news the time's with labour, and
throes forth,

Each minute, some.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII. *A plain near Actium.*

*Enter CÆSAR, and TAURUS, with his army,
marching.*

Cæs. Taurus!

Taur. My lord?

Cæs. Strike not by land; keep whole: provoke
not battle,

Till we have done at sea. Do not exceed

The prescript of this scroll: our fortune lies

Upon this jump.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX. *Another part of the plain.*

Enter ANTONY and ENOBARBUS.

Ant. Set we our squadrons on yond side o' the
hill,

In eye of Cæsar's battle; from which place

We may the number of the ships behold,

And so proceed accordingly.

[*Exeunt.*

6. *jump*, hazard.

SCENE X. *Another part of the plain.*

CANIDIUS *marcheth with his land army one way over the stage; and TAURUS, the lieutenant of CÆSAR, the other way. After their going in, is heard the noise of a sea-fight.*

Alarum. Enter ENOBARBUS.

Eno. Naught, naught, all naught! I can behold no longer:
The Antoniad, the Egyptian admiral,
With all their sixty, fly and turn the rudder:
To see 't mine eyes are blasted.

Enter SCARUS.

Scar. Gods and goddesses,
All the whole synod of them!

Eno. What's thy passion?

Scar. The greater cantle of the world is lost
With very ignorance; we have kiss'd away
Kingdoms and provinces.

Eno. How appears the fight?

Scar. On our side like the token'd pestilence,
Where death is sure. Yon ribaudred nag of
Egypt,—

Whom leprosy o'ertake!—i' the midst o' the fight,
When vantage like a pair of twins appear'd,

6. *cantle*, piece, share.

9. *token'd*, spotted. A particular eruption which, in cases of plague, always indicated that the victim would die, was known as 'God's token.'

10. *ribaudred*, probably 'ribald,' 'wanton.' But no

satisfactory account can be given of this word, which occurs nowhere else. 'Riband-red' and 'ribanded' (L.) (= decked with streamers) are excellent emendations as regards the sense, but give a very questionable metre.

Both as the same, or rather ours the elder,
The breese upon her, like a cow in June,
Hoists sails and flies.

Eno. That I beheld :

Mine eyes did sicken at the sight, and could not
Endure a further view.

Scar. She once being loof'd,
The noble ruin of her magic, Antony,
Claps on his sea-wing, and, like a doting mallard, 20
Leaving the fight in height, flies after her :
I never saw an action of such shame ;
Experience, manhood, honour, ne'er before
Did violate so itself.

Eno. Alack, alack !

Enter CANIDIUS.

Can. Our fortune on the sea is out of breath,
And sinks most lamentably. Had our general
Been what he knew himself, it had gone well :
O, he has given example for our flight,
Most grossly, by his own !

Eno. Ay, are you thereabouts ?
Why, then, good night indeed. 30

Can. Toward Peloponnesus are they fled.

Scar. 'Tis easy to't ; and there I will attend
What further comes.

Can. To Cæsar will I render
My legions and my horse : six kings already
Show me the way of yielding.

Eno. I'll yet follow
The wounded chance of Antony, though my reason
Sits in the wind against me. [Exeunt.

14. *breese*, the gadfly, occurs
in the Teutonic languages
under varying but similar forms,
all imitative of the sound of the

insect.

18. *loof'd*, brought close to
the wind.

20. *mallard*, a wild drake.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

SCENE XI. *Alexandria. Cleopatra's palace.*

Enter ANTONY *with* Attendants.

Ant. Hark ! the land bids me tread no more upon't ;

It is ashamed to bear me ! Friends, come hither :
I am so lated in the world, that I
Have lost my way for ever : I have a ship
Laden with gold ; take that, divide it ; fly,
And make your peace with Cæsar.

All. Fly ! not we.

Ant. I have fled myself ; and have instructed cowards

To run and show their shoulders. Friends, be gone ;

I have myself resolved upon a course

Which has no need of you ; be gone :

My treasure's in the harbour, take it. O,

I follow'd that I blush to look upon :

My very hairs do mutiny ; for the white

Reprove the brown for rashness, and they them

For fear and doting. Friends, be gone : you shall

Have letters from me to some friends that will

Sweep your way for you. Pray you, look not sad,

Nor make replies of loathness : take the hint

Which my despair proclaims ; let that be left

Which leaves itself : to the sea-side straightway :

I will possess you of that ship and treasure,

Leave me, I pray, a little : pray you now :

Nay, do so ; for, indeed, I have lost command,

Therefore I pray you : I'll see you by and by.

[*Sits down.*]

3. *lated*, belated.

*Enter CLEOPATRA led by CHARMIAN and IRAS :
EROS following.*

Eros. Nay, gentle madam, to him, comfort him.

Iras. Do, most dear queen.

Char. Do ! why, what else ?

Cleo. Let me sit down. O Juno !

Ant. No, no, no, no, no.

Eros. See you here, sir ?

30

Ant. O fie, fie, fie !

Char. Madam !

Iras. Madam, O good empress !

Eros. Sir, sir.

Ant. Yes, my lord, yes ; he at Philippi kept
His sword e'en like a dancer ; while I struck
The lean and wrinkled Cassius ; and 'twas I
That the mad Brutus ended : he alone
Dealt on lieutenantry, and no practice had
In the brave squares of war : yet now—No matter. 40

Cleo. Ah, stand by.

Eros. The queen, my lord, the queen.

Iras. Go to him, madam, speak to him :
He is unqualitied with very shame.

Cleo. Well then, sustain me : O !

Eros. Most noble sir, arise ; the queen ap-
proaches :

Her head's declined, and death will seize her, but
Your comfort makes the rescue.

Ant. I have offended reputation,
A most unnoble swerving.

Eros. Sir, the queen.

50

Ant. O, whither hast thou led me, Egypt ? See,
How I convey my shame out of thine eyes

37. 38. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, took the field by deputy.
Act V.

39. *Dealt on lieutenantry*, 52. *convey*, carry.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

By looking back what I have left behind
'Sstroy'd in dishonour.

Cleo. O my lord, my lord,
Forgive my fearful sails ! I little thought
You would have follow'd.

Ant. Egypt, thou knew'st too well
My heart was to thy rudder tied by the strings,
And thou shouldst tow me after : o'er my spirit
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st, and that
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods 60
Command me.

Cleo. O, my pardon !

Ant. Now I must
To the young man send humble treaties, dodge
And palter in the shifts of lowness ; who
With half the bulk o' the world play'd as I pleased,
Making and marring fortunes. You did know
How much you were my conqueror, and that
My sword, made weak by my affection, would
Obey it on all cause.

Cleo. Pardon, pardon !

Ant. Fall not a tear, I say ; one of them rates 70
All that is won and lost : give me a kiss ;
Even this repays me. We sent our schoolmaster ;
Is he come back ? Love, I am full of lead.
Some wine, within there, and our viands ! Fortune
knows
We scorn her most when most she offers blows.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE XII. *Egypt. Cæsar's camp.*

Enter CÆSAR, DOLABELLA, THYREUS, with others.

Cæs. Let him appear that 's come from Antony.
Know you him ?

69. *rates*, amounts to.

Antony and Cleopatra

Dol. Cæsar, 'tis his schoolmaster :
 An argument that he is pluck'd, when hither
 He sends so poor a pinion of his wing,
 Which had superfluous kings for messengers
 Not many moons gone by.

Enter EUPHRONIUS, ambassador from Antony.

Cæs. Approach, and speak.

Euph. Such as I am, I come from Antony :
 I was of late as petty to his ends
 As is the morn-dew on the myrtle-leaf
 To his grand sea.

Cæs. Be't so : declare thine office. 10

Euph. Lord of his fortunes he salutes thee, and
 Requires to live in Egypt : which not granted,
 He lessens his requests ; and to thee sues
 To let him breathe between the heavens and earth,
 A private man in Athens : this for him.
 Next, Cleopatra does confess thy greatness ;
 Submits her to thy might, and of thee craves
 The circle of the Ptolemies for her heirs,
 Now hazarded to thy grace.

Cæs. For Antony,
 I have no ears to his request. The queen 20
 Of audience nor desire shall fail, so she
 From Egypt drive her all-disgraced friend,
 Or take his life there : this if she perform,
 She shall not sue unheard. So to them both.

Euph. Fortune pursue thee !

Cæs. Bring him through the bands.

[*Exit Euphronius.*]

[*To Thyreus*] To try thy eloquence, now 'tis time :
 dispatch ;

From Antony win Cleopatra : promise,
 And in our name, what she requires ; add more,
 From thine invention, offers : women are not

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

In their best fortunes strong ; but want will perjure 30
The ne'er-touch'd vestal : try thy cunning, Thyreus ;
Make thine own edict for thy pains, which we
Will answer as a law.

Thyr. Cæsar, I go.

Cæs. Observe how Antony becomes his flaw,
And what thou think'st his very action speaks
In every power that moves.

Thyr. Cæsar, I shall. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE XIII. *Alexandria. Cleopatra's palace.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, ENOBARBUS, CHARMIAN,
and IRAS.

Cleo. What shall we do, Enobarbus ?

Eno. Think, and die.

Cleo. Is Antony or we in fault for this ?

Eno. Antony only, that would make his will
Lord of his reason. What though you fled
From that great face of war, whose several ranges
Frighted each other ? why should he follow ?
The itch of his affection should not then
Have nick'd his captainship ; at such a point,
When half to half the world opposed, he being
The mered question : 'twas a shame no less 10
Than was his loss, to course your flying flags,
And leave his navy gazing.

Cleo. Prithee, peace.

34. *becomes his flaw*, adapts himself to the collapse of his fortunes.

8. *nick'd*, properly cut in notches ; here 'curtailed.'

10. *mered*, sole, only : Antony being the only cause of the war. Rowe read *meer*, Johnson

mooted.

11. *course*, chase.

*Enter ANTONY with EUPHRONIUS, the
Ambassador.*

Ant. Is that his answer?

Euph. Ay, my lord.

Ant. The queen shall then have courtesy, so she
Will yield us up.

Euph. He says so.

Ant. Let her know 't.

To the boy Cæsar send this grizzled head,
And he will fill thy wishes to the brim
With principalities.

Cleo. That head, my lord?

Ant. To him again : tell him he wears the rose 20
Of youth upon him ; from which the world should
note

Something particular : his coin, ships, legions,
May be a coward's ; whose ministers would prevail
Under the service of a child as soon
As i' the command of Cæsar : I dare him therefore
To lay his gay comparisons apart,
And answer me declined, sword against sword,
Ourselves alone. I'll write it : follow me.

[Exeunt Antony and Euphronius.]

Eno. [Aside] Yes, like enough, high-battled
Cæsar will

Unstate his happiness, and be staged to the show, 30
Against a sworder ! I see men's judgements are
A parcel of their fortunes, and things outward
Do draw the inward quality after them,
To suffer all alike. That he should dream,
Knowing all measures, the full Cæsar will

26. *comparisons*, advantages ; 27. *declined*, in my fallen
the elements in the situation condition.
which become apparent when I
am compared with him. 30. *happiness*, good fortune.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

Answer his emptiness ! Cæsar, thou hast subdued
His judgement too.

Enter an Attendant.

Att. A messenger from Cæsar.

Cleo. What, no more ceremony ? See, my
women,

Against the blown rose may they stop their nose
That kneel'd unto the buds. Admit him, sir.

40

[Exit Attendant.]

Eno. *[Aside]* Mine honesty and I begin to square.
The loyalty well held to fools does make
Our faith mere folly : yet he that can endure
To follow with allegiance a fall'n lord
Does conquer him that did his master conquer,
And earns a place i' the story.

Enter THYREUS.

Cleo. Cæsar's will ?

Thyr. Hear it apart.

Cleo. None but friends : say boldly.

Thyr. So, haply, are they friends to Antony.

Eno. He needs as many, sir, as Cæsar has ;
Or needs not us. If Cæsar please, our master
Will leap to be his friend : for us, you know
Whose he is we are, and that is, Cæsar's.

50

Thyr. So.

Thus then, thou most renown'd : Cæsar entreats,
Not to consider in what case thou stand'st,
Further than he is Cæsar.

Cleo. Go on : right royal.

Thyr. He knows that you embrace not Antony
As you did love, but as you fear'd him.

Cleo. O !

Thyr. The scars upon your honour, therefore, he

39. *blown, overblown, and no longer fragrant.* L.

Does pity, as constrained blemishes,
Not as deserved.

Cleo. He is a god, and knows 60
What is most right : mine honour was not yielded,
But conquer'd merely.

Eno. [*Aside*] To be sure of that,
I will ask Antony. Sir, sir, thou art so leaky,
That we must leave thee to thy sinking, for
Thy dearest quit thee. [*Exit.*

Thyr. Shall I say to Cæsar
What you require of him? for he partly begs
To be desired to give. It much would please
him,
That of his fortunes you should make a staff
To lean upon : but it would warm his spirits,
To hear from me you had left Antony, 70
And put yourself under his shroud,
The universal landlord.

Cleo. What's your name?

Thyr. My name is Thyreus.

Cleo. Most kind messenger,
Say to great Cæsar this : in deputation
I kiss his conquering hand : tell him, I am prompt
To lay my crown at 's feet, and there to kneel :
Tell him, from his all-obeying breath I hear
The doom of Egypt.

Thyr. 'Tis your noblest course.
Wisdom and fortune combating together,
If that the former dare but what it can, 80
No chance may shake it. Give me grace to lay
My duty on your hand.

Cleo. Your Cæsar's father oft,
When he hath mused of taking kingdoms in,
Bestow'd his lips on that unworthy place,
As it rain'd kisses.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

Re-enter ANTONY and ENOBARBUS.

Ant. Favours, by Jove that thunders !
What art thou, fellow ?

Thyr. One that but performs
The bidding of the fullest man, and worthiest
To have command obey'd.

Eno. [*Aside*] You will be whipp'd.

Ant. Approach, there ! Ah, you kite ! Now,
gods and devils !
Authority melts from me : of late, when I cried
' Ho !'

90

Like boys unto a muss, kings would start forth,
And cry ' Your will ? ' Have you no ears ? I am
Antony yet.

Enter Attendants.

Take hence this Jack, and whip him.

Eno. [*Aside*] 'Tis better playing with a lion's
whelp
Than with an old one dying.

Ant. Moon and stars !
Whip him. Were't twenty of the greatest tribu-
taries

That do acknowledge Cæsar, should I find them
So saucy with the hand of she here,—what's her
name,

Since she was Cleopatra ? Whip him, fellows,
Till, like a boy, you see him cringe his face,
And whine aloud for mercy : take him hence.

100

Thyr. Mark Antony !—

Ant. Tug him away : being whipp'd,
Bring him again : this Jack of Cæsar's shall
Bear us an errand to him.

[Exeunt Attendants with Thyreus.]

91. *muss*, a scramble among boys for nuts or coins.

You were half blasted ere I knew you : ha !
 Have I my pillow left unpress'd in Rome,
 Forborne the getting of a lawful race,
 And by a gem of women, to be abused
 By one that looks on feeders ?

Cleo. Good my lord,—

Ant. You have been a boggler ever : 110

But when we in our viciousness grow hard—
 O misery on't !—the wise gods seel our eyes ;
 In our own filth drop our clear judgements ; make
 us

Adore our errors ; laugh at 's, while we strut
 To our confusion.

Cleo. O, is't come to this ?

Ant. I found you as a morsel cold upon
 Dead Cæsar's trencher ; nay, you were a fragment
 Of Cneius Pompey's ; besides what hotter hours,
 Unregister'd in vulgar fame, you have
 Luxuriously pick'd out : for, I am sure, 120
 Though you can guess what temperance should be,
 You know not what it is.

Cleo. Wherefore is this ?

Ant. To let a fellow that will take rewards
 And say 'God quit you !' be familiar with
 My playfellow, your hand ; this kingly seal
 And plighter of high hearts ! O, that I were
 Upon the hill of Basan, to outroar
 The horned herd ! for I have savage cause ;
 And to proclaim it civilly, were like
 A halter'd neck which does the hangman thank 130
 For being yare about him.

Re-enter Attendants with THYREUS.

Is he whipp'd ?

109. *feeders*, parasites.

falconry).

112. *seel*, blindfold (a term of

131. *yare*, prompt.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT III

First Att. Soundly, my lord.

Ant. Cried he? and begg'd he pardon?

First Att. He did ask favour.

Ant. If that thy father live, let him repent
Thou wast not made his daughter; and be thou
sorry

To follow Cæsar in his triumph, since
Thou hast been whipp'd for following him: hence-
forth

The white hand of a lady fever thee,
Shake thou to look on't. Get thee back to Cæsar,
Tell him thy entertainment: look, thou say 140
He makes me angry with him; for he seems
Proud and disdainful, harping on what I am,
Not what he knew I was: he makes me angry;
And at this time most easy 'tis to do't,
When my good stars, that were my former guides,
Have empty left their orbs, and shot their fires
Into the abysm of hell. If he mislike
My speech and what is done, tell him he has
Hipparchus, my enfranchised bondman, whom
He may at pleasure whip, or hang, or torture, 150
As he shall like, to quit me: urge it thou:
Hence with thy stripes, begone! [*Exit Thyreus.*

Cleo. Have you done yet?

Ant. Alack, our terrene moon
Is now eclipsed; and it portends alone
The fall of Antony!

Cleo. I must stay his time.

Ant. To flatter Cæsar, would you mingle eyes
With one that ties his points?

Cleo. Not know me yet?

Ant. Cold-hearted toward me?

Cleo. Ah, dear, if I be so,
From my cold heart let heaven engender hail,

157. *points*, the laces which supported the hose.

And poison it in the source ; and the first stone 160
 Drop in my neck : as it determines, so
 Dissolve my life ! The next Cæsarion smite !
 Till by degrees the memory of my womb,
 Together with my brave Egyptians all,
 By the discandying of this pelleted storm,
 Lie graveless, till the flies and gnats of Nile
 Have buried them for prey !

Ant.

I am satisfied.

Cæsar sits down in Alexandria, where
 I will oppose his fate. Our force by land
 Hath nobly held ; our sever'd navy too 170
 Have knit again, and fleet, threatening most sea-
 like.

Where hast thou been, my heart ? Dost thou
 hear, lady ?

If from the field I shall return once more
 To kiss these lips, I will appear in blood ;
 I and my sword will earn our chronicle :
 There's hope in 't yet.

Cleo. That's my brave lord !

Ant. I will be treble-sinew'd, hearted, breathed,
 And fight maliciously : for when mine hours
 Were nice and lucky, men did ransom lives 180
 Of me for jests ; but now I'll set my teeth,
 And send to darkness all that stop me. Come,
 Let's have one other gaudy night : call to me
 All my sad captains ; fill our bowls once more ;
 Let's mock the midnight bell.

Cleo.

It is my birth-day :

I had thought to have held it poor ; but, since my
 lord

Is Antony again, I will be Cleopatra.

Ant. We will yet do well.

162. *Cæsarion smite* ; Han-
 mer's correction for Ff 'C. smile.'

165. *discandying*, thawing.
 183. *gaudy*, festive.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV

Cleo. Call all his noble captains to my lord.

Ant. Do so, we'll speak to them; and to-night
I'll force

190

The wine peep through their scars. Come on, my
queen;

There's sap in't yet. The next time I do fight,
I'll make death love me; for I will contend
Even with his pestilent scythe.

[*Exeunt all but Enobarbus.*]

Eno. Now he'll outstare the lightning. To be
furious,

Is to be frighted out of fear; and in that mood
The dove will peck the estridge; and I see still,
A diminution in our captain's brain
Restores his heart: when valour preys on reason,
It eats the sword it fights with. I will seek
Some way to leave him.

201

[*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Before Alexandria. Cæsar's camp.*

*Enter CÆSAR, AGRIPPA, and MECÆNAS, with his
Army; CÆSAR reading a letter.*

Cæs. He calls me boy, and chides, as he had
power

To beat me out of Egypt; my messenger
He hath whipp'd with rods; dares me to personal
combat,

Cæsar to Antony: let the old ruffian know
I have many other ways to die; meantime
Laugh at his challenge.

197. *estridge, ostrich.*

Antony and Cleopatra

Mec. Cæsar must think,
When one so great begins to rage, he's hunted
Even to falling. Give him no breath, but now
Make boot of his distraction : never anger
Made good guard for itself.

Cæs. Let our best heads 20
Know, that to-morrow the last of many battles
We mean to fight : within our files there are,
Of those that served Mark Antony but late,
Enough to fetch him in. See it done :
And feast the army ; we have store to do 't,
And they have earn'd the waste. Poor Antony !
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Alexandria. Cleopatra's palace.*

Enter ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, ENOBARBUS,
CHARMIAN, IRAS, ALEXAS, *with others.*

Ant. He will not fight with me, Domitius.

Eno. No

Ant. Why should he not ?

Eno. He thinks, being twenty times of better
fortune,

He is twenty men to one.

Ant. To-morrow, soldier,
By sea and land I'll fight : or I will live,
Or bathe my dying honour in the blood
Shall make it live again. Woo't thou fight well ?

Eno. I'll strike, and cry 'Take all.'

Ant. Well said ; come on.
Call forth my household servants : let's to-night
Be bounteous at our meal.

Enter three or four Servitors.

Give me thy hand. 11

9. *boot*, profit.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV

Thou hast been rightly honest ;—so hast thou ;—
Thou,—and thou,—and thou :—you have served
me well,

And kings have been your fellows.

Cleo. [*Aside to Eno.*] What means this ?

Eno. [*Aside to Cleo.*] 'Tis one of those odd
tricks which sorrow shoots

Out of the mind.

Ant. And thou art honest too.

I wish I could be made so many men,
And all of you clapp'd up together in
An Antony, that I might do you service
So good as you have done.

All. The gods forbid !

Ant. Well, my good fellows, wait on me to-night : 20
Scant not my cups ; and make as much of me
As when mine empire was your fellow too,
And suffer'd my command.

Cleo. [*Aside to Eno.*] What does he mean ?

Eno. [*Aside to Cleo.*] To make his followers weep.

Ant. Tend me to-night ;

May be it is the period of your duty :
Haply you shall not see me more ; or if,
A mangled shadow : perchance to-morrow
You'll serve another master. I look on you
As one that takes his leave. Mine honest friends,
I turn you not away ; but, like a master 30
Married to your good service, stay till death :
Tend me to-night two hours, I ask no more,
And the gods yield you for't !

Eno. What mean you, sir,
To give them this discomfort ? Look, they weep,
And I, an ass, am onion-eyed : for shame,
Transform us not to women.

Ant. Ho, ho, ho !

25. *period*, close.

33. *yield*, repay.

Antony and Cleopatra

Now the witch take me, if I meant it thus!
 Grace grow where those drops fall! My hearty
 friends,

You take me in too dolorous a sense;
 For I spake to you for your comfort; did desire you ⁴⁰
 To burn this night with torches: know, my hearts,
 I hope well of to-morrow; and will lead you
 Where rather I'll expect victorious life
 Than death and honour. Let's to supper, come,
 And drown consideration. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The same. Before the palace.*

Enter two Soldiers to their guard.

First Sold. Brother, good night: to-morrow is
 the day.

Sec. Sold. It will determine one way: fare you
 well.

Heard you of nothing strange about the streets?

First Sold. Nothing. What news?

Sec. Sold. Belike 'tis but a rumour. Good
 night to you.

First Sold. Well, sir, good night.

Enter two other Soldiers.

Sec. Sold. Soldiers, have careful watch.

Third Sold. And you. Good night, good night.

[*They place themselves in every corner of
 the stage.*]

Fourth Sold. Here we: and if to-morrow
 Our navy thrive, I have an absolute hope
 Our landmen will stand up. 11

Third Sold. 'Tis a brave army,
 And full of purpose.

[*Music of the hautboys as under the stage.*]

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV

Fourth Sold. Peace ! what noise ?
First Sold. List, list !
Sec. Sold. Hark !
First Sold. Music i' the air.
Third Sold. Under the earth.
Fourth Sold. It signs well, does it not ?
Third Sold. No.
First Sold. Peace, I say !
 What should this mean ?
Sec. Sold. 'Tis the god Hercules, whom Antony
 loved,
 Now leaves him.
First Sold. Walk ; let's see if other watchmen
 Do hear what we do.
 [*They advance to another post.*
Sec. Sold. How now, masters !
All. [*Speaking together*] How now !
 How now ! do you hear this ?
First Sold. Ay ; is't not strange ? 20
Third Sold. Do you hear, masters ? do you
 hear ?
First Sold. Follow the noise so far as we have
 quarter ;
 Let's see how it will give off.
All. Content. 'Tis strange. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The same. A room in the palace.*

Enter ANTONY and CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN,
and others attending.

Ant. Eros ! mine armour, Eros !

Cleo. Sleep a little.

15. *signs, forebodes.*

Antony and Cleopatra

Ant. No, my chuck. Eros, come ; mine armour,
Eros !

Enter EROS with armour.

Come, good fellow, put mine iron on :
If fortune be not ours to-day, it is
Because we brave her : come.

Cleo.

Nay, I'll help too.

What's this for ?

Ant.

Ah, let be, let be ! thou art

The armourer of my heart : false, false ; this, this.

Cleo. Sooth, la, I'll help : thus it must be.

Ant.

Well, well :

We shall thrive now. Seest thou, my good fellow ?
Go put on thy defences.

Eros.

Briefly, sir.

10

Cleo. Is not this buckled well ?

Ant.

Rarely, rarely :

He that unbuckles this, till we do please
To daff't for our repose, shall hear a storm.
Thou fumblest, Eros ; and my queen's a squire
More tight at this than thou : dispatch. O love,
That thou couldst see my wars to-day, and knew'st
The royal occupation ! thou shouldst see
A workman in't.

Enter an armed Soldier.

Good morrow to thee ; welcome :
Thou look'st like him that knows a warlike charge :
To business that we love we rise betime,
And go to't with delight.

20

Sold.

A thousand, sir,

2. *chuck*, a variant of 'chick,'
used as a term of endear-
ment.

3. *iron*, weapon.

13. *daff*, doff.

15. *tight*, quick, alert.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV

Early though 't be, have on their riveted trim,
And at the port expect you.

[*Shout. Trumpets flourish.*]

Enter Captains and Soldiers.

Capt. The morn is fair. Good morrow, general.

All. Good morrow, general.

Ant. 'Tis well blown, lads :

This morning, like the spirit of a youth

That means to be of note, begins betimes.

So, so ; come, give me that : this way ; well said.

Fare thee well, dame, whate'er becomes of me :

This is a soldier's kiss : rebukeable [*Kisses her.* 30

And worthy shameful check it were, to stand

On more mechanic compliment ; I'll leave thee

Now, like a man of steel. You that will fight,

Follow me close ; I'll bring you to't. Adieu.

[*Exeunt Antony, Eros, Captains, and
Soldiers.*]

Char. Please you, retire to your chamber.

Cleo. Lead me.

He goes forth gallantly. That he and Cæsar might

Determine this great war in single fight !

Then, Antony,—but now—Well, on. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *Alexandria. Antony's camp.*

*Trumpets sound. Enter ANTONY and EROS ; a
Soldier meeting them.*

Sold. The gods make this a happy day to Antony !

Ant. Would thou and those thy scars had once
prevail'd

To make me fight at land !

32. *mechanic, commonplace.*

Sold. Hadst thou done so,
The kings that have revolted, and the soldier
That has this morning left thee, would have still
Follow'd thy heels.

Ant. Who's gone this morning?

Sold. Who!

One ever near thee: call for Enobarbus,
He shall not hear thee; or from Cæsar's camp
Say 'I am none of thine.'

Ant. What say'st thou?

Sold. Sir,

He is with Cæsar.

Eros. Sir, his chests and treasure 10
He has not with him.

Ant. Is he gone?

Sold. Most certain.

Ant. Go, Eros, send his treasure after; do it;
Detain no jot, I charge thee: write to him—
I will subscribe—gentle adieus and greetings;
Say that I wish he never find more cause
To change a master. O, my fortunes have
Corrupted honest men! Dispatch. Enobarbus!
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Alexandria. Cæsar's camp.*

Flourish. Enter CÆSAR, AGRIPPA, with ENO-
BARBUS, and others.

Cæs. Go forth, Agrippa, and begin the fight:
Our will is Antony be took alive;
Make it so known.

Agr. Cæsar, I shall. [*Exit.*]

Cæs. The time of universal peace is near:

17. *Dispatch. Enobarbus!* Enobarbus'; F₂ 'Dispatch
So Steevens. F₁ has 'Dispatch, Eros.'

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV

Prove this a prosperous day, the three-nook'd world
Shall bear the olive freely.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Antony
Is come into the field.

Cæs. Go charge Agrippa
Plant those that have revolted in the van,
That Antony may seem to spend his fury 10
Upon himself. [*Exeunt all but Enobarbus.*]

Eno. Alexas did revolt; and went to Jewry on
Affairs of Antony; there did persuade
Great Herod to incline himself to Cæsar,
And leave his master Antony: for this pains
Cæsar hath hang'd him. Canidius and the rest
That fell away have entertainment, but
No honourable trust. I have done ill;
Of which I do accuse myself so sorely,
That I will joy no more.

Enter a Soldier of CÆSAR's.

Sold. Enobarbus, Antony 20
Hath after thee sent all thy treasure, with
His bounty overplus: the messenger
Came on my guard; and at thy tent is now
Unloading of his mules.

Eno. I give it you.

Sold. Mock not, Enobarbus.
I tell you true: best you safed the bringer
Out of the host; I must attend mine office,
Or would have done't myself. Your emperor
Continues still a Jove. [*Exit.*]

Eno. I am alone the villain of the earth, 30

6. *three-nook'd*, three- formed by its three seats of
cornered; the Roman world sovereignty.
being conceived as the triangle 26. *safed*, gave safe-conduct to.

And feel I am so most. O Antony,
 Thou mine of bounty, how wouldst thou have paid
 My better service, when my turpitude
 Thou dost so crown with gold! This blows my
 heart :

If swift thought break it not, a swifter mean
 Shall outstrike thought: but thought will do 't, I
 feel.

I fight against thee! No: I will go seek
 Some ditch wherein to die; the foul'st best fits
 My latter part of life. [Exit.

SCENE VII. *Field of battle between the camps.*

*Alarum. Drums and trumpets. Enter AGRIPPA
 and others.*

Agr. Retire, we have engaged ourselves too far:
 Cæsar himself has work, and our oppression
 Exceeds what we expected. [Exeunt.

*Alarums. Enter ANTONY, and SCARUS
 wounded.*

Scar. O my brave emperor, this is fought indeed!
 Had we done so at first, we had droven them home
 With clouts about their heads.

Ant. Thou bleed'st apace.

Scar. I had a wound here that was like a T,
 But now 'tis made an H.

Ant. They do retire.

Scar. We'll beat 'em into bench-holes: I have
 yet
 Room for six scotches more.

10

34. *blows*, swells with emotion.

35. *mean*, instrument

Enter EROS.

Eros. They are beaten, sir ; and our advantage
serves
For a fair victory.

Scar. Let us score their backs,
And snatch 'em up, as we take hares, behind :
'Tis sport to maul a runner.

Ant. I will reward thee
Once for thy spritely comfort, and ten-fold
For thy good valour. Come thee on.

Scar. I'll halt after. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VIII. *Under the walls of Alexandria.*

Alarum. *Enter* ANTONY, *in a march* ; SCARUS,
with others.

Ant. We have beat him to his camp : run one
before,
And let the queen know of our gests. To-morrow,
Before the sun shall see 's, we'll spill the blood
That has to-day escaped. I thank you all ;
For doughty-handed are you, and have fought
Not as you served the cause, but as't had been
Each man's like mine ; you have shown all Hector's.
Enter the city, clip your wives, your friends,
Tell them your feats ; whilst they with joyful tears
Wash the congealment from your wounds, and kiss 10
The honour'd gashes whole. [*To Scarus*] Give me
thy hand ;

Enter CLEOPATRA, *attended.*

To this great fairy I'll commend thy acts,

2. *gests*, feats. So Warburton for Ff 'guests.'

Make her thanks bless thee. [*To Cleo.*] O thou
 day o' the world,
 Chain mine arm'd neck ; leap thou, attire and all,
 Through proof of harness to my heart, and there
 Ride on the pants triumphing !

Cleo. Lord of lords !
 O infinite virtue, comest thou smiling from
 The world's great snare uncaught ?

Ant. My nightingale,
 We have beat them to their beds. What, girl !
 though grey

Do something mingle with our younger brown,
 yet ha' we

20

A brain that nourishes our nerves, and can
 Get goal for goal of youth. Behold this man ;
 Commend unto his lips thy favouring hand :
 Kiss it, my warrior : he hath fought to-day
 As if a god in hate of mankind had
 Destroy'd in such a shape.

Cleo. I'll give thee, friend,
 An armour all of gold ; it was a king's.

Ant. He has deserved it, were it carbuncled
 Like holy Phoebus' car. Give me thy hand :
 Through Alexandria make a jolly march ;
 Bear our hack'd targets like the men that owe
 them :

30

Had our great palace the capacity
 To camp this host, we all would sup together,
 And drink carouses to the next day's fate,
 Which promises royal peril. Trumpeters,
 With brazen din blast you the city's ear ;
 Make mingle with our rattling tabourines ;
 That heaven and earth may strike their sounds
 together,

Applauding our approach.

[*Exeunt.*

31. targets, shields.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV

SCENE IX. *Cæsar's camp.*

Sentinels at their post.

First Sold. If we be not relieved within this hour,
We must return to the court of guard : the night
Is shiny ; and they say we shall embattle
By the second hour i' the morn.

Sec. Sold. This last day was
A shrewd one to 's.

Enter ENOBARBUS.

Eno. O, bear me witness, night,—

Third Sold. What man is this ?

Sec. Sold. Stand close, and list him.

Eno. Be witness to me, O thou blessed moon,
When men revolted shall upon record
Bear hateful memory, poor Enobarbus did
Before thy face repent !

First Sold. Enobarbus !

Third Sold. Peace !

Hark further.

Eno. O sovereign mistress of true melancholy,
The poisonous damp of night disponge upon me,
That life, a very rebel to my will,
May hang no longer on me : throw my heart
Against the flint and hardness of my fault ;
Which, being dried with grief, will break to powder,
And finish all foul thoughts. O Antony,
Nobler than my revolt is infamous,
Forgive me in thine own particular ;
But let the world rank me in register
A master-leaver and a fugitive :
O Antony ! O Antony !

[*Dies.*

5. *shrewd*, bad.

sc. x

Antony and Cleopatra

Sec. Sold.

Let's speak

To him.

First Sold. Let's hear him, for the things he
speaks

May concern Cæsar.

Third Sold. Let's do so. But he sleeps.

First Sold. Swoons rather; for so bad a prayer
as his

Was never yet for sleep.

Sec. Sold.

Go we to him.

Third Sold. Awake, sir, awake; speak to us.

Sec. Sold. Hear you, sir?

First Sold. The hand of death hath raught him.

[*Drums afar off.*] Hark! the drums

30

Demurely wake the sleepers. Let us bear him
To the court of guard; he is of note: our hour
Is fully out.

Third Sold. Come on, then;

He may recover yet. [*Exeunt with the body.*]

SCENE X. *Between the two camps.*

Enter ANTONY and SCARUS, with their Army.

Ant. Their preparation is to-day by sea;
We please them not by land.

Scar.

For both, my lord.

Ant. I would they 'ld fight i' the fire or i' the air;
We 'ld fight there too. But this it is; our foot
Upon the hills adjoining to the city
Shall stay with us: order for sea is given;
They have put forth the haven . . .
Where their appointment we may best discover,
And look on their endeavour. [*Exeunt.*]

30. *raught*, reached.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV

SCENE XI. *Another part of the same.*

Enter CÆSAR, and his Army.

Cæs. But being charged, we will be still by land,
Which, as I take 't, we shall ; for his best force
Is forth to man his galleys. To the vales,
And hold our best advantage. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XII. *Another part of the same.*

Enter ANTONY and SCARUS.

Ant. Yet they are not join'd : where yond pine
does stand,
I shall discover all : I'll bring thee word
Straight, how 'tis like to go. [*Exit.*

Scar. Swallows have built
In Cleopatra's sails their nests : the augurers
Say they know not, they cannot tell ; look grimly,
And dare not speak their knowledge. Antony
Is valiant, and dejected ; and, by starts,
His fretted fortunes give him hope, and fear,
Of what he has, and has not.

[*Alarum afar off, as at a sea-fight.*

Re-enter ANTONY.

Ant. All is lost ;
This foul Egyptian hath betrayed me : 10
My fleet hath yielded to the foe ; and yonder
They cast their caps up and carouse together
Like friends long lost. Triple-turn'd whore ! 'tis thou

13. *Triple-turn'd*, as having to Cæsar, Antony, and Octavius.
given her favours successively

Hast sold me to this novice ; and my heart
 Makes only wars on thee. Bid them all fly ;
 For when I am revenged upon my charm,
 I have done all. Bid them all fly ; begone.

[*Exit Scarus.*]

O sun, thy uprise shall I see no more :
 Fortune and Antony part here ; even here
 Do we shake hands. All come to this ? The hearts 20
 That spaniel'd me at heels, to whom I gave
 Their wishes, do discandy, melt their sweets
 On blossoming Cæsar ; and this pine is bark'd,
 That overtopp'd them all. Betray'd I am :
 O this false soul of Egypt ! this grave charm,—
 Whose eye beck'd forth my wars, and call'd them
 home ;
 Whose bosom was my crownet, my chief end,—
 Like a right gipsy, hath, at fast and loose,
 Beguiled me to the very heart of loss.
 What, Eros, Eros !

Enter CLEOPATRA.

Ah, thou spell ! Avaunt. 30

Cleo. Why is my lord enraged against his love ?

Ant. Vanish, or I shall give thee thy deserving,
 And blemish Cæsar's triumph. Let him take thee,
 And hoist thee up to the shouting plebeians :
 Follow his chariot, like the greatest spot
 Of all thy sex ; most monster-like, be shown
 For poor'st diminutives, for doits ; and let
 Patient Octavia plough thy visage up
 With her prepared nails.

[*Exit Cleopatra.*]

'Tis well thou'rt gone,
 If it be well to live ; but better 'twere 40
 Thou fell'st into my fury, for one death

37. *diminutives*, insignificant creatures.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV

Might have prevented many. Eros, ho !
 The shirt of Nessus is upon me : teach me,
 Alcides, thou mine ancestor, thy rage :
 Let me lodge Lichas on the horns o' the moon ;
 And with those hands, that grasp'd the heaviest
 club,
 Subdue my worthiest self. The witch shall die :
 To the young Roman boy she hath sold me, and
 I fall
 Under this plot ; she dies for 't. Eros, ho ! [*Exit.*]

SCENE XIII. *Alexandria. Cleopatra's palace.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, and
MARDIAN.

Cleo. Help me, my women ! O, he is more mad
 Than Telamon for his shield ; the boar of Thessaly
 Was never so emboss'd.

Char. To the monument !
 There lock yourself, and send him word you are
 dead.
 The soul and body rive not more in parting

43. *shirt of Nessus*, the en-
 venomed shirt presented to
 Hercules by the Centaur Nessus,
 which drove the hero into
 paroxysms of agonised fury,
 and finally caused his death.
 Alcides was a title of Hercules ;
 Antony claimed descent from
 him, and is sometimes repre-
 sented in his garb.

45. *Lichas*, the servant who
 carried the shirt to Hercules.
 He was flung into the Eubœan
 Sea by his master, and changed

by the gods into a rock.

2. *Telamon* was shield-bearer
 to Hercules when the latter
 destroyed Troy.

2. *the boar of Thessaly*, the
 Calydonian boar, sent by Diana
 to ravage the territory of CENEUS,
 king of Ætolia, who had been
 remiss in sacrifice. The boar
 was at last slain by Meleager,
 the son of CENEUS.

3. *emboss'd*, foaming at the
 mouth, infuriated.

Than greatness going off.

Cleo.

To the monument !

Mardian, go tell him I have slain myself ;

Say, that the last I spoke was ' Antony,'

And word it, prithee, piteously : hence, Mardian,

And bring me how he takes my death. To the

monument !

[*Exeunt.* 10

SCENE XIV. *The same. Another room.*

Enter ANTONY and EROS.

Ant. Eros, thou yet behold'st me ?

Eros.

Ay, noble lord.

Ant. Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish,

A vapour sometime like a bear or lion,

A tower'd citadel, a pendent rock,

A forked mountain, or blue promontory

With trees upon 't, that nod unto the world,

And mock our eyes with air : thou hast seen these
signs ;

They are black vesper's pageants.

Eros.

Ay, my lord.

Ant. That which is now a horse, even with a
thought

The rack dislimns, and makes it indistinct,

As water is in water.

Eros.

It does, my lord.

Ant. My good knave Eros, now thy captain is
Even such a body : here I am Antony ;

Yet cannot hold this visible shape, my knave.

I made these wars for Egypt : and the queen,—

Whose heart I thought I had, for she had mine ;

Which whilst it was mine had annex'd unto 't

10. *rack*, floating vapour.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV

A million more, now lost,—she, Eros, has
Pack'd cards with Cæsar, and false-play'd my glory
Unto an enemy's triumph.

20

Nay, weep not, gentle Eros ; there is left us
Ourselves to end ourselves.

Enter MARDIAN.

O, thy vile lady !

She has robb'd me of my sword.

Mar.

No, Antony ;

My mistress loved thee, and her fortunes mingled
With thine entirely.

Ant.

Hence, saucy eunuch ; peace !

She hath betray'd me and shall die the death.

Mar. Death of one person can be paid but once,
And that she has discharged : what thou wouldst do
Is done unto thy hand : the last she spake
Was ' Antony ! most noble Antony ! '

30

Then in the midst a tearing groan did break
The name of Antony ; it was divided
Between her heart and lips : she render'd life,
Thy name so buried in her.

Ant.

Dead, then ?

Mar.

Dead.

Ant. Unarm, Eros ; the long day's task is done,
And we must sleep. [*To Mar.*] That thou de-
part'st hence safe,

Does pay thy labour richly ; go. [*Exit Mardian.*

Off, pluck off :

The seven-fold shield of Ajax cannot keep
The battery from my heart. O, cleave, my sides !
Heart, once be stronger than thy continent,
Crack thy frail case ! Apace, Eros, apace !

40

No more a soldier : bruised pieces, go ;

You have been nobly borne. From me awhile.

[*Exit Eros.*

I will o'ertake thee, Cleopatra, and
 Weep for my pardon. So it must be, for now
 All length is torture : since the torch is out,
 Lie down, and stray no farther : now all labour
 Mars what it does ; yea, very force entangles
 Itself with strength : seal then, and all is done.
 Eros !—I come, my queen :—Eros !—Stay for me : 50
 Where souls do couch on flowers, we'll hand in
 hand,
 And with our sprightly port make the ghosts gaze :
 Dido and her Æneas shall want troops,
 And all the haunt be ours. Come, Eros, Eros !

Re-enter EROS.

Eros. What would my lord ?

Ant. Since Cleopatra died,
 I have lived in such dishonour, that the gods
 Detest my baseness. I, that with my sword
 Quarter'd the world, and o'er green Neptune's
 back
 With ships made cities, condemn myself to lack
 The courage of a woman ; less noble mind 60
 Than she which by her death our Cæsar tells
 ' I am conqueror of myself.' Thou art sworn, Eros,
 That, when the exigent should come,—which now
 Is come indeed,—when I should see behind me
 The inevitable prosecution of
 Disgrace and horror, that, on my command,
 Thou then wouldst kill me : do't ; the time is
 come :
 Thou strikest not me, 'tis Cæsar thou defeat'st.
 Put colour in thy cheek.

Eros. The gods withhold me !
 Shall I do that which all the Parthian darts, 70
 Though enemy, lost aim, and could not ?

Ant.

Eros,

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV

Wouldst thou be window'd in great Rome and see
Thy master thus with pleach'd arms, bending down
His corrigible neck, his face subdued
To penetrative shame, whilst the wheel'd seat
Of fortunate Cæsar, drawn before him, branded
His baseness that ensued?

Eros. I would not see't

Ant. Come, then; for with a wound I must be
cured.

Draw that thy honest sword, which thou hast worn
Most useful for thy country.

Eros. O, sir, pardon me! 80

Ant. When I did make thee free, swore'st thou
not then

To do this when I bade thee? Do it at once;

Or thy precedent services are all

But accidents unpurposed. Draw, and come.

Eros. Turn from me, then, that noble counte-
nance,

Wherein the worship of the whole world lies.

Ant. Lo thee! [*Turning from him.*

Eros. My sword is drawn.

Ant. Then let it do at once

The thing why thou hast drawn it.

Eros. My dear master,

My captain, and my emperor, let me say, 90

Before I strike this bloody stroke, farewell.

Ant. 'Tis said, man; and farewell.

Eros. Farewell, great chief. Shall I strike now?

Ant. Now, Eros.

Eros. Why, there then: thus I do escape the
sorrow

Of Antony's death. [*Kills himself.*

Ant. Thrice-nobler than myself!

Thou teachest me, O valiant Eros, what

73. *pleach'd, folded.*

I should, and thou couldst not. My queen and
Eros

Have by their brave instruction got upon me
A nobleness in record : but I will be
A bridegroom in my death, and run into 't 100
As to a lover's bed. Come, then ; and, Eros,
Thy master dies thy scholar : to do thus

[*Falling on his sword.*]

I learn'd of thee. How ! not dead ? not dead ?
The guard, ho ! O, dispatch me !

Enter DERCETAS and Guard.

First Guard. What's the noise ?

Ant. I have done my work ill, friends : O,
make an end

Of what I have begun.

Sec. Guard. The star is fall'n.

First Guard. And time is at his period.

All. Alas, and woe !

Ant. Let him that loves me strike me dead.

First Guard. Not I.

Sec. Guard. Nor I.

Third Guard. Nor any one. [*Exeunt Guard.* 110

Der. Thy death and fortunes bid thy followers
fly.

This sword but shown to Cæsar, with this tidings,
Shall enter me with him.

Enter DIOMEDES.

Dio. Where's Antony ?

Der. There, Diomed, there.

Dio. Lives he ?

Wilt thou not answer, man ? [*Exit Dercetas.*

Ant. Art thou there, Diomed ? Draw thy sword
and give me

Sufficing strokes for death.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV

Dio. Most absolute lord,
My mistress Cleopatra sent me to thee.

Ant. When did she send thee?

Dio. Now, my lord.

Ant. Where is she?

Dio. Lock'd in her monument. She had a
prophesying fear

120

Of what hath come to pass : for when she saw—
Which never shall be found—you did suspect
She had disposed with Cæsar, and that your rage
Would not be purged, she sent you word she was
dead ;

But, fearing since how it might work, hath sent
Me to proclaim the truth ; and I am come,
I dread, too late.

Ant. Too late, good Diomed : call my guard, I
prithee.

Dio. What, ho, the emperor's guard ! The
guard, what, ho !

Come, your lord calls !

130

Enter four or five of the Guard of ANTONY.

Ant. Bear me, good friends, where Cleopatra bides ;
'Tis the last service that I shall command you.

First Guard. Woe, woe are we, sir, you may
not live to wear

All your true followers out.

All. Most heavy day !

Ant. Nay, good my fellows, do not please sharp
fate

To grace it with your sorrows : bid that welcome
Which comes to punish us, and we punish it
Seeming to bear it lightly. Take me up :
I have led you oft : carry me now, good friends,
And have my thanks for all.

140

[*Exeunt, bearing Antony.*

Antony and Cleopatra

SCENE XV. *The same. A monument.*

*Enter CLEOPATRA, and her maids aloft, with
CHARMIAN and IRAS.*

Cleo. O Charmian, I will never go from hence.

Char. Be comforted, dear madam.

Cleo. No, I will not :

All strange and terrible events are welcome,
But comforts we despise ; our size of sorrow,
Proportion'd to our cause, must be as great
As that which makes it.

Enter, below, DIOMEDES.

How now ! is he dead ?

Dio. His death's upon him, but not dead.

Look out o' the other side your monument ;
His guard have brought him thither.

Enter, below, ANTONY, borne by the Guard.

Cleo. O sun,

Burn the great sphere thou movest in ! darkling
stand

10

The varying shore o' the world. O Antony,
Antony, Antony ! Help, Charmian, help, Iras,
help ;

Help, friends below ; let's draw him hither.

Ant. Peace !

Not Cæsar's valour hath o'erthrown Antony,
But Antony's hath triumph'd on itself.

Cleo. So it should be, that none but Antony
Should conquer Antony ; but woe 'tis so !

Ant. I am dying, Egypt, dying ; only
I here importune death awhile, until

10. *darkling*, in the dark.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT IV

Of many thousand kisses the poor last
I lay upon thy lips.

Cleo. I dare not, dear,
Dear my lord, pardon, I dare not,
Lest I be taken : not the imperious show
Of the full-fortuned Cæsar ever shall
Be brooch'd with me ; if knife, drugs, serpents,
have

Edge, sting, or operation, I am safe :
Your wife Octavia, with her modest eyes
And still conclusion, shall acquire no honour
Demuring upon me. But come, come, Antony,—
Help me, my women,—we must draw thee up : 30
Assist, good friends.

Ant. O, quick, or I am gone.

Cleo. Here's sport indeed ! How heavy weighs
my lord !

Our strength is all gone into heaviness ;
That makes the weight. Had I great Juno's
power,

The strong-wing'd Mercury should fetch thee up,
And set thee by Jove's side. Yet come a little,—
Wishers were ever fools,—O, come, come, come ;

[*They heave Antony aloft to Cleopatra.*]

And welcome, welcome ! die where thou hast lived :
Quicken with kissing : had my lips that power,
Thus would I wear them out.

All. A heavy sight ! 40

Ant. I am dying, Egypt, dying :
Give me some wine, and let me speak a little.

Cleo. No, let me speak, and let me rail so high,
That the false housewife Fortune break her wheel,
Provoked by my offence.

Ant. One word, sweet queen :

25. *brooch'd*, adorned.

29. *Demuring*, looking with mock modesty.

Antony and Cleopatra

Of Cæsar seek your honour, with your safety. O !

Cleo. They do not go together.

Ant. Gentle, hear me :

None about Cæsar trust but Proculeius.

Cleo. My resolution and my hands I'll trust ;
None about Cæsar.

50

Ant. The miserable change now at my end
Lament nor sorrow at ; but please your thoughts
In feeding them with those my former fortunes
Wherein I lived, the greatest prince o' the world,
The noblest, and do now not basely die,
Not cowardly put off my helmet to
My countryman, a Roman by a Roman
Valiantly vanquish'd. Now my spirit is going ;
I can no more.

Cleo. Noblest of men, woo't die ?

Hast thou no care of me ? shall I abide

60

In this dull world, which in thy absence is

No better than a sty ? O, see, my women,

[*Antony dies.*

The crown o' the earth doth melt. My lord !

O, wither'd is the garland of the war,

The soldier's pole is fall'n : young boys and girls

Are level now with men ; the odds is gone,

And there is nothing left remarkable

Beneath the visiting moon. [*Faints.*

Char. O, quietness, lady !

Irás. She's dead too, our sovereign.

Char. Lady !

Irás. Madam !

Char. O madam, madam, madam !

Irás. Royal Egypt, 70

Empress !

Char. Peace, peace, Irás !

Cleo. No more, but e'en a woman, and commanded

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT V

By such poor passion as the maid that milks
And does the meanest chares. It were for me
To throw my sceptre at the injurious gods,
To tell them that this world did equal theirs
Till they had stol'n our jewel. All's but naught;
Patience is sottish, and impatience does
Become a dog that's mad: then is it sin 80
To rush into the secret house of death,
Ere death dare come to us? How do you, women?
What, what! good cheer! Why, how now, Char-
mian!
My noble girls! Ah, women, women, look,
Our lamp is spent, it's out! Good sirs, take heart:
We'll bury him; and then, what's brave, what's
noble,
Let's do it after the high Roman fashion,
And make death proud to take us. Come, away:
This case of that huge spirit now is cold:
Ah, women, women! come; we have no friend 90
But resolution, and the briefest end.

[*Exeunt; those above bearing off
Antony's body.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Alexandria. Cæsar's camp.*

*Enter CÆSAR, AGRIPPA, DOLABELLA, MECÆNAS,
GALLUS, PROCULEIUS, and others, his council
of war.*

Cæs. Go to him, Dolabella, bid him yield;
Being so frustrate, tell him he mocks

75. *chares*, turns of work, 'jobs.'

The pauses that he makes.

Dol.

Cæsar, I shall. [*Exit.*

Enter DERCETAS, with the sword of ANTONY.

Cæs. Wherefore is that? and what art thou that darest

Appear thus to us?

Der.

I am call'd Dercetas;

Mark Antony I served, who best was worthy
Best to be served: whilst he stood up and spoke,
He was my master; and I wore my life
To spend upon his haters. If thou please
To take me to thee, as I was to him
I'll be to Cæsar; if thou pleasest not,
I yield thee up my life.

10

Cæs.

What is't thou say'st?

Der. I say, O Cæsar, Antony is dead.

Cæs. The breaking of so great a thing should make

A greater crack: the round world
Should have shook lions into civil streets,
And citizens to their dens: the death of Antony
Is not a single doom; in the name lay
A moiety of the world.

Der.

He is dead, Cæsar;

Not by a public minister of justice,
Nor by a hired knife; but that self hand,
Which writ his honour in the acts it did,
Hath, with the courage which the heart did lend it,
Splitted the heart. This is his sword;
I robb'd his wound of it; behold it stain'd
With his most noble blood.

20

Cæs.

Look you sad, friends?

The gods rebuke me, but it is tidings
To wash the eyes of kings.

Agg.

And strange it is,

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT V

That nature must compel us to lament
Our most persisted deeds.

Mec. His taints and honours 30
Waged equal with him.

Agr. A rarer spirit never
Did steer humanity : but you, gods, will give us
Some faults to make us men. Cæsar is touch'd.

Mec. When such a spacious mirror's set before
him,
He needs must see himself.

Cæs. O Antony !
I have follow'd thee to this ; but we do lance
Diseases in our bodies : I must perforce
Have shown to thee such a declining day,
Or look on thine ; we could not stall together
In the whole world : but yet let me lament, 40
With tears as sovereign as the blood of hearts,
That thou, my brother, my competitor
In top of all design, my mate in empire,
Friend and companion in the front of war,
The arm of mine own body, and the heart
Where mine his thoughts did kindle,—that our
stars,
Unreconciliable, should divide
Our equalness to this. Hear me, good friends,—

Enter an Egyptian.

But I will tell you at some meeter season :
The business of this man looks out of him ; 50
We'll hear him what he says. Whence are you ?

Egyp. A poor Egyptian yet. The queen my
mistress,
Confined in all she has, her monument,
Of thy intents desires instruction,
That she preparedly may frame herself

30. *persisted*, persisted in, persistent.

To the way she's forced to.

Cæs. Bid her have good heart :

She soon shall know of us, by some of ours,

How honourable and how kindly we

Determine for her ; for Cæsar cannot live

To be ungentle.

Egypt. So the gods preserve thee ! [*Exit.* 60

Cæs. Come hither, Proculeius. Go and say,

We purpose her no shame : give her what comforts

The quality of her passion shall require,

Lest, in her greatness, by some mortal stroke

She do defeat us ; for her life in Rome

Would be eternal in our triumph : go,

And with your speediest bring us what she says,

And how you find of her.

Pro. Cæsar, I shall. [*Exit.*

Cæs. Gallus, go you along. [*Exit Gallus.*]

Where's Dolabella,

To second Proculeius ?

All. Dolabella ! 70

Cæs. Let him alone, for I remember now

How he's employ'd : he shall in time be ready.

Go with me to my tent ; where you shall see

How hardly I was drawn into this war ;

How calm and gentle I proceeded still

In all my writings : go with me, and see

What I can show in this. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Alexandria. A room in the monument.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, and IRAS.

Cleo. My desolation does begin to make

A better life. 'Tis paltry to be Cæsar ;

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT V

Not being Fortune, he's but Fortune's knave,
A minister of her will : and it is great
To do that thing that ends all other deeds ;
Which shackles accidents and bolts up change ;
Which sleeps, and never palates more the dug,
The beggar's nurse and Cæsar's.

Enter, to the gates of the monument, PROCULEIUS, GALLUS, and Soldiers.

Pro. Cæsar sends greeting to the Queen of
Egypt ;
And bids thee study on what fair demands 10
Thou mean'st to have him grant thee.

Cleo. What's thy name ?

Pro. My name is Proculeius.

Cleo. • Antony
Did tell me of you, bade me trust you ; but
I do not greatly care to be deceived,
That have no use for trusting. If your master
Would have a queen his beggar, you must tell him,
That majesty, to keep decorum, must
No less beg than a kingdom : if he please
To give me conquer'd Egypt for my son,
He gives me so much of mine own, as I 20
Will kneel to him with thanks.

Pro. Be of good cheer ;
You're fall'n into a princely hand, fear nothing :
Make your full reference freely to my lord,
Who is so full of grace, that it flows over
On all that need : let me report to him
Your sweet dependency ; and you shall find
A conqueror that will pray in aid for kindness,
Where he for grace is kneel'd to.

Cleo. Pray you, tell him
I am his fortune's vassal, and I send him
The greatness he has got. I hourly learn 30

Antony and Cleopatra

A doctrine of obedience, and would gladly
Look him i' the face.

Pro. This I'll report, dear lady.
Have comfort, for I know your plight is pitied
Of him that caused it.

Gal. You see how easily she may be surprised :

[*Here Proculeius and two of the Guard
ascend the monument by a ladder placed
against a window, and, having descend-
ed, come behind Cleopatra. Some of
the Guard unbar and open the gates.*]

[*To Proculeius and the Guard*] Guard her till
Cæsar come. [Exit.

Iras. Royal queen !

Char. O Cleopatra ! thou art taken, queen.

Cleo. Quick, quick, good hands.

[*Drawing a dagger.*]

Pro. Hold, worthy lady, hold :
[*Seizes and disarms her.*]

Do not yourself such wrong, who are in this 40
Relieved, but not betray'd.

Cleo. What, of death too,
That rids our dogs of languish ?

Pro. Cleopatra,
Do not abuse my master's bounty by
The undoing of yourself : let the world see
His nobleness well acted, which your death
Will never let come forth.

Cleo. Where art thou, death ?
Come hither, come ! come, come, and take a queen
Worth many babes and beggars !

Pro. O, temperance, lady !

Cleo. Sir, I will eat no meat, I'll not drink, sir ;
If idle talk will once be necessary, 50

42. *languish*, lingering disease.

48. *temperance*, moderation.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT V

I'll not sleep neither : this mortal house I'll ruin,
Do Cæsar what he can. Know, sir, that I
Will not wait pinion'd at your master's court,
Nor once be chastised with the sober eye
Of dull Octavia. Shall they hoist me up
And show me to the shouting varletry
Of censuring Rome? Rather a ditch in Egypt
Be gentle grave unto me ! rather on Nilus' mud
Lay me stark naked, and let the water-flies
Blow me into abhorring ! rather make
My country's high pyramides my gibbet,
And hang me up in chains !

60

Pro. You do extend
These thoughts of horror further than you shall
Find cause in Cæsar.

Enter DOLABELLA.

Dol. Proculeius,
What thou hast done thy master Cæsar knows,
And he hath sent for thee : for the queen,
I'll take her to my guard.

Pro. So, Dolabella,
It shall content me best : be gentle to her.
[*To Cleo.*] To Cæsar I will speak what you shall
please,
If you'll employ me to him.

Cleo. Say, I would die. 70
[*Exeunt Proculeius and Soldiers.*]

Dol. Most noble empress, you have heard of me?

Cleo. I cannot tell.

Dol. Assuredly you know me.

Cleo. No matter, sir, what I have heard or
known.

You laugh when boys or women tell their dreams ;
Is't not your trick ?

Dol. I understand not, madam.

Antony and Cleopatra

Cleo. I dream'd there was an Emperor Antony :
O, such another sleep, that I might see
But such another man !

Dol. If it might please ye,—

Cleo. His face was as the heavens ; and therein
stuck

A sun and moon, which kept their course, and
lighted

80

The little O, the earth.

Dol. Most sovereign creature,—

Cleo. His legs bestrid the ocean : his rear'd arm
Crested the world : his voice was propertyed
As all the tuned spheres, and that to friends ;
But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,
He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,
There was no winter in 't ; an autumn 'twas
That grew the more by reaping : his delights
Were dolphin-like ; they show'd his back above
The element they lived in : in his livery
Walk'd crowns and crownets, realms and islands
were

90

As plates dropp'd from his pocket.

Dol. Cleopatra !

Cleo. Think you there was, or might be, such
a man

As this I dream'd of ?

Dol. Gentle madam, no.

Cleo. You lie, up to the hearing of the gods.
But, if there be, or ever were, one such,

83. *propertyed as all the tuned spheres*, harmonious as the spheres. For the Platonic doctrine of the harmony of the spheres cf. the *Timæus*, §§ 37 *et seq.* : 'The body of heaven is visible, but the soul is invisible, and partakes of reason and

harmony' (Jowett's translation), cf. note to *Merchant of Venice*, v. i. 63-65.

85. *quail*, make tremble.

87. *an autumn 'twas*. So Theobald, for Ff 'an Anthony it was.'

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT V

It's past the size of dreaming : nature wants stuff
To vie strange forms with fancy ; yet, to imagine
An Antony, were nature's piece 'gainst fancy,
Condemning shadows quite.

Dol. Hear me, good madam. 100
Your loss is as yourself, great ; and you bear it
As answering to the weight : would I might never
O'ertake pursued success, but I do feel,
By the rebound of yours, a grief that smites
My very heart at root.

Cleo. I thank you, sir.
Know you what Cæsar means to do with me ?

Dol. I am loath to tell you what I would you
knew.

Cleo. Nay, pray you, sir,—

Dol. Though he be honourable,—

Cleo. He'll lead me, then, in triumph ?

Dol. Madam, he will ; I know't. 110

[*Flourish, and shout within, 'Make way there :
Cæsar !'*

*Enter CÆSAR, GALLUS, PROCULEIUS, MECÆNAS,
SELEUCUS, and others of his Train.*

Cæs. Which is the Queen of Egypt ?

Dol. It is the emperor, madam.

[*Cleopatra kneels.*

Cæs. Arise, you shall not kneel :

I pray you, rise ; rise, Egypt.

Cleo.

Sir, the gods

Will have it thus ; my master and my lord

I must obey.

Cæs. Take to you no hard thoughts :

The record of what injuries you did us,

Though written in our flesh, we shall remember

As things but done by chance.

99. *piece, masterpiece.*

Cleo. Sole sir o' the world, 120
 I cannot project mine own cause so well
 To make it clear; but do confess I have
 Been laden with like frailties which before
 Have often shamed our sex.

Cæs. Cleopatra, know,
 We will extenuate rather than enforce:
 If you apply yourself to our intents,
 Which towards you are most gentle, you shall find
 A benefit in this change; but if you seek
 To lay on me a cruelty, by taking
 Antony's course, you shall bereave yourself 130
 Of my good purposes, and put your children
 To that destruction which I'll guard them from,
 If thereon you rely. I'll take my leave.

Cleo. And may, through all the world: 'tis
 yours; and we,
 Your scutcheons and your signs of conquest, shall
 Hang in what place you please. Here, my good
 lord.

Cæs. You shall advise me in all for Cleopatra.

Cleo. This is the brief of money, plate, and
 jewels,
 I am possess'd of: 'tis exactly valued,
 Not petty things admitted. Where's Seleucus? 140
Sel. Here, madam.

Cleo. This is my treasurer: let him speak, my
 lord,

Upon his peril, that I have reserved
 To myself nothing. Speak the truth, Seleucus.

Sel. Madam,
 I had rather seal my lips, than, to my peril,
 Speak that which is not.

121. *project*, shape.

which gives an easier sense; but

140. *admitted*, registered.

Theobald suggested 'omitted,' Cleopatra means: 'omitting
 trifles only.' L.

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT V

Cleo. What have I kept back?

Sel. Enough to purchase what you have made known.

Cæs. Nay, blush not, Cleopatra; I approve
Your wisdom in the deed.

Cleo. See, Cæsar! O, behold, 150
How pomp is follow'd! mine will now be yours,
And, should we shift estates, yours would be mine.
The ingratitude of this Seleucus does
Even make me wild. O slave, of no more trust
Than love that's hired! What, goest thou back?
thou shalt

Go back, I warrant thee; but I'll catch thine eyes,
Though they had wings: slave, soulless villain, dog!
O rarely base!

Cæs. Good queen, let us entreat you.

Cleo. O Cæsar, what a wounding shame is this,
That thou, vouchsafing here to visit me, 160
Doing the honour of thy lordliness
To one so meek, that mine own servant should
Parcel the sum of my disgraces by
Addition of his envy! Say, good Cæsar,
That I some lady trifles have reserved,
Immoment toys, things of such dignity
As we greet modern friends withal; and say,
Some nobler token I have kept apart
For Livia and Octavia, to induce
Their mediation; must I be unfolded 170
With one that I have bred? The gods! it smites
me

Beneath the fall I have. [*To Seleucus*] Prithee,
go hence;
Or I shall show the cinders of my spirits
Through the ashes of my chance: wert thou a man,

163. *Parcel*, specify.

174. *my chance*, my fallen

166. *Immoment*, trifling.

fortunes.

Thou wouldst have mercy on me.

Cæs.

Forbear, Seleucus.

[*Exit Seleucus.*

Cleo. Be it known, that we, the greatest, are
misthought

For things that others do ; and, when we fall,
We answer others' merits in our name,
Are therefore to be pitied.

Cæs.

Cleopatra,

Not what you have reserved, nor what acknow-
ledged,

180

Put we i' the roll of conquest : still be 't yours,
Bestow it at your pleasure, and believe,
Cæsar's no merchant, to make prize with you
Of things that merchants sold. Therefore be cheer'd ;
Make not your thoughts your prisons : no, dear queen ;
For we intend so to dispose you as
Yourself shall give us counsel. Feed, and sleep :
Our care and pity is so much upon you,
That we remain your friend ; and so, adieu.

Cleo. My master, and my lord !

Cæs.

Not so. Adieu. 190

[*Flourish. Exeunt Cæsar and his train.*

Cleo. He words me, girls, he words me, that I
should not

Be noble to myself : but, hark thee, Charmian.

[*Whispers Charmian.*

Iras. Finish, good lady ; the bright day is done,
And we are for the dark.

Cleo.

Hie thee again :

I have spoke already, and it is provided ;
Go put it to the haste.

Char.

Madam, I will

Re-enter DOLABELLA.

Dol. Where is the queen ?

Antony and Cleopatra

ACT V

Char.

Behold, sir. [*Exit.*

Cleo.

Dolabella!

Dol. Madam, as thereto sworn by your command,

Which my love makes religion to obey,
I tell you this: Cæsar through Syria
Intends his journey, and within three days
You with your children will he send before:
Make your best use of this: I have perform'd
Your pleasure and my promise.

200

Cleo.

Dolabella,

I shall remain your debtor.

Dol.

I your servant.

Adieu, good queen; I must attend on Cæsar.

Cleo. Farewell, and thanks. [*Exit Dolabella.*

Now, Iras, what think'st thou?

Thou, an Egyptian puppet, shalt be shown
In Rome, as well as I: mechanic slaves
With greasy aprons, rules, and hammers, shall
Uplift us to the view: in their thick breaths,
Rank of gross diet, shall we be enclouded,
And forced to drink their vapour.

210

Iras.

The gods forbid!

Cleo. Nay, 'tis most certain, Iras: saucy lictors
Will catch at us like strumpets; and scald rhymers
Ballad us out o' tune: the quick comedians
Extemporally will stage us, and present
Our Alexandrian revels; Antony
Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
I' the posture of a whore.

220

Iras.

O the good gods!

Cleo. Nay, that's certain.

210. *greasy aprons*, etc. Cf. bald head), mangy.
Julius Cæsar, i. 1. 4, 5.

215. *scald* (with a peeled or 220. *boy*; women's parts
being always played by boys.

Antony and Cleopatra

Iras. I'll never see't; for, I am sure, my nails
Are stronger than mine eyes.

Cleo. Why, that's the way
To fool their preparation, and to conquer
Their most absurd intents.

Re-enter CHARMIAN.

Now, Charmian!
Show me, my women, like a queen: go fetch
My best attires: I am again for Cydnus,
To meet Mark Antony: sirrah Iras, go.
Now, noble Charmian, we'll dispatch indeed, 230
And, when thou hast done this chare, I'll give
thee leave
To play till doomsday. Bring our crown and all.
Wherefore's this noise?

[*Exit Iras. A noise within.*

Enter a Guardsman.

Guard. Here is a rural fellow
That will not be denied your highness' presence:
He brings you figs.

Cleo. Let him come in. [*Exit Guardsman.*

What poor an instrument
May do a noble deed! he brings me liberty.
My resolution's placed, and I have nothing
Of woman in me: now from head to foot
I am marble-constant; now the fleeting moon 240
No planet is of mine.

Re-enter Guardsman, with Clown bringing in a basket.

Guard. This is the man.

Cleo. Avoid, and leave him. [*Exit Guardsman.*
Hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there,
That kills and pains not?

Clown. Truly, I have him: but I would not

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be the party that should desire you to touch him, for his biting is immortal; those that do die of it do seldom or never recover.

Cleo. Rememberest thou any that have died on 't?

Clown. Very many, men and women too. I ²⁵⁰ heard of one of them no longer than yesterday: a very honest woman, but something given to lie; as a woman should not do, but in the way of honesty: how she died of the biting of it, what pain she felt: truly, she makes a very good report o' the worm; but he that will believe all that they say, shall never be saved by half that they do: but this is most fallible, the worm's an odd worm.

Cleo. Get thee hence; farewell.

260

Clown. I wish you all joy of the worm.

[*Setting down his basket.*

Cleo. Farewell.

Clown. You must think this, look you, that the worm will do his kind.

Cleo. Ay, ay; farewell.

Clown. Look you, the worm is not to be trusted but in the keeping of wise people, for, indeed, there is no goodness in the worm.

Cleo. Take thou no care; it shall be heeded.

Clown. Very good. Give it nothing, I pray ²⁷⁰ you, for it is not worth the feeding.

Cleo. Will it eat me?

Clown. You must not think I am so simple but I know the devil himself will not eat a woman: I know that a woman is a dish for the gods, if the devil dress her not. But, truly, these same whoreson devils do the gods great harm in their women; for in every ten that they make, the devils mar five.

258. *fallible*, for 'infallible.'

Cleo. Well, get thee gone ; farewell.

280

Clown. Yes, forsooth : I wish you joy o' the worm.
[*Exit.*

Re-enter IRAS with a robe, crown, etc.

Cleo. Give me my robe, put on my crown ;
I have

Immortal longings in me : now no more
The juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip :
Yare, yare, good Iras ; quick. Methinks I hear
Antony call ; I see him rouse himself .
To praise my noble act ; I hear him mock
The luck of Cæsar, which the gods give men
To excuse their after wrath. Husband, I come : 290
Now to that name my courage prove my title !
I am fire and air ; my other elements
I give to baser life. So ; have you done ?
Come then, and take the last warmth of my lips.
Farewell, kind Charmian ; Iras, long farewell.

[*Kisses them. Iras falls and dies.*

Have I the aspic in my lips ? Dost fall ?
If thou and nature can so gently part,
The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch,
Which hurts, and is desired. Dost thou lie still ?
If thus thou vanishest, thou tell'st the world 300
It is not worth leave-taking.

Char. Dissolve, thick cloud, and rain ; that I
may say,
The gods themselves do weep !

Cleo. This proves me base :
If she first meet the curled Antony,
He'll make demand of her, and spend that kiss
Which is my heaven to have. Come, thou mortal
wretch,

[*To an asp, which she applies to her breast.*

306. mortal, deadly.

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With thy sharp teeth this knot intrinsicate
Of life at once untie: poor venomous fool,
Be angry, and dispatch. O, couldst thou speak,
That I might hear thee call great Cæsar ass
Unpolicied!

310

Char. O eastern star!

Cleo. Peace, peace!

Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,
That sucks the nurse asleep?

Char. O, break! O, break!

Cleo. As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle,—
O Antony!—Nay, I will take thee too:

[Applying another asp to her arm.]

What should I stay— *[Dies.]*

Char. In this vile world? So, fare thee well.
Now boast thee, death, in thy possession lies
A lass unparallel'd. Downy windows, close;
And golden Phœbus never be beheld
Of eyes again so royal! Your crown's awry;
I'll mend it, and then play.

320

Enter the Guard, rushing in.

First Guard. Where is the queen?

Char. Speak softly, wake her not.

First Guard. Cæsar hath sent—

Char. Too slow a messenger.
[Applies an asp.]

O, come apace, dispatch: I partly feel thee.

First Guard. Approach, ho! All's not well:
Cæsar's beguiled.

Sec. Guard. There's Dolabella sent from Cæsar;
call him.

First Guard. What work is here! Charmian, is
this well done?

307. *intrinsicate*, probably
for 'intricate.'

311. *Unpolicied*, without
policy, at a nonplus.

Char. It is well done, and fitting for a princess
Descended of so many royal kings.

Ah, soldier ! 330
[*Dies.*

Re-enter DOLABELLA.

Dol. How goes it here ?

Sec. Guard. All dead.

Dol. Cæsar, thy thoughts
Touch their effects in this : thyself art coming
To see perform'd the dreaded act which thou
So sought'st to hinder.

[*Within* 'A way there, a way for Cæsar !'

Re-enter CÆSAR and all his train, marching.

Dol. O sir, you are too sure an augurer ;
That you did fear is done.

Cæs. Bravest at the last,
She levell'd at our purposes, and, being royal,
Took her own way. The manner of their deaths ? 340
I do not see them bleed.

Dol. Who was last with them ?

First Guard. A simple countryman, that brought
her figs :
This was his basket.

Cæs. Poison'd, then.

First Guard. O Cæsar,
This Charmian lived but now ; she stood and
spake :

I found her trimming up the diadem
On her dead mistress ; tremblingly she stood
And on the sudden dropp'd.

Cæs. O noble weakness !
If they had swallow'd poison, 'twould appear
By external swelling : but she looks like sleep,
As she would catch another Antony 350

339. *levell'd at*, guessed.

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In her strong toil of grace.

Dol. Here, on her breast,
There is a vent of blood and something blown :
The like is on her arm.

First Guard. This is an aspic's trail : and these
fig-leaves

Have slime upon them, such as the aspic leaves
Upon the caves of Nile.

Cæs. Most probable
That so she died ; for her physician tells me
She hath pursued conclusions infinite
Of easy ways to die. Take up her bed ;
And bear her women from the monument : 360
She shall be buried by her Antony :
No grave upon the earth shall clip in it
A pair so famous. High events as these
Strike those that make them ; and their story is
No less in pity than his glory which
Brought them to be lamented. Our army shall
In solemn show attend this funeral,
And then to Rome. Come, Dolabella, see
High order in this great solemnity. [*Exeunt.*

362. *clip*, embrace.

END OF VOL. IX

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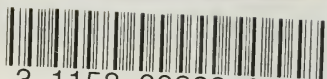
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